

DAVID LEFKOWITZ OF DALLAS: A RABBI FOR ALL SEASONS

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This dissertation discusses the impact David Lefkowitz and his ministry had on Dallas during the years of his ministry (1920-1949) at Temple Emanu-El in Dallas Texas, and the years following his death in 1955. The focus is on his involvement in civic activities, although his pastoral activities are also discussed. Sources include interviews with family members, friends and acquaintances, newspaper articles, journals, internet sources, unpublished theses and dissertations about Dallas and related subjects, minutes of the Temple's Board of Directors' meetings, minutes of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, minutes of the Board of Directors' Meetings of the Dallas Jewish Welfare Federation, the *Temple Emanu-El Bulletins*, and selected sermons, speeches and letters of David Lefkowitz.

David Lefkowitz was an important figure in the history of Dallas. He taught, by precept and example, that Jews could participate fully in the civic life of Dallas. Because of his teachings, Jews made a positive difference in the development of Dallas. He has left a lasting impression on Dallas, and through his ministry and hard work, he made Dallas a better place for all its citizens.

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PREFACE

A group portrait hangs in Dallas' City Hall. Painted by Victor Lallier from 1951 through 1956, it depicts a gathering of some of the city's fathers. It shows bankers such as Nathan Adams, president of First National Bank, Fred Florence, president of Republic National Bank, J. Woodall Rogers, mayor of Dallas throughout the years of World War II, John W. Carpenter of Texas Power and Light Company, Karl Hoblitzelle, the owner of a chain of vaudeville theaters, who became one of Dallas's greatest philanthropists, R. L. Thornton, banker and former mayor, and David Lefkowitz, rabbi of Temple Emanu-El.¹ Only one other Jew is included in this remarkable picture, Lefkowitz's son-in-law, Fred Florence. No other clergymen are depicted. One wonders, "who was David Lefkowitz and why was he so important that he was included in this painting?" David Lefkowitz had a profound effect on the evolution of Dallas into a modern city and in the creation of a climate of acceptance for Jews in an overwhelmingly Protestant society.

In June, 1920, David Lefkowitz came to Texas from Dayton, Ohio in, where he had achieved great prominence as rabbi of Temple B'nai Jeshuran. (Sons of the Righteous). Temple Emanu-El, the oldest and largest Jewish congregation in Dallas, had been without a rabbi for over a year following the resignation of former spiritual leader, Dr. William Henry Greenberg. Lefkowitz had grown up in the Hebrew Orphan Asylum in New York City, as his widowed mother being unable to care for him and his younger

¹Darwin Payne. *Big D: Triumphs and Troubles of an American Supercity in the 20th Century*. (Dallas: Three Forks Press, 1994), 69.

brother. Reform Jews ran this institution, and they taught the young boys in their care to become model American citizens. David Lefkowitz spent his entire life carrying out this charge.

David Lefkowitz had been an important citizen in Dayton, and the town fathers tried hard to persuade him to stay, but he was determined to go to Texas. However, he saw a greater opportunity in Dallas, so he moved his family to Dallas and began a memorable ministry.² Within a few months of his arrival, his new congregation presented Lefkowitz, known as “The Doctor,” with a new car.³

Immediately upon his move to Dallas, Lefkowitz was showered by invitations to become active in civic and social affairs. The Critic Club was perhaps the most prestigious of these offers. This group, which began in 1908, counted among its members the most influential citizens of the city and served as a forum where new ideas might be discussed.⁴

Lefkowitz spent his first decade in Dallas establishing himself and Temple Emanu-El in civic and religious circles. He had an open mind and worked hard to make Reform Judaism acceptable to the Orthodox who looked upon the Reform movement with some

²*The Jewish Monitor*, 26 March, 1920.

³ *The Jewish Monitor*, 1 October, 1920. There is no record of this gift in the minutes of the congregations’ Board of Directors’ meetings, nor is there an acknowledgment of this car in Lefkowitz’s private papers. Lefkowitz was probably addressed as “Doctor” as a mark of respect. In later years he was awarded two honorary doctorates, but was called “Doctor” before receiving them.

⁴ Michael V. Hazel, “The Critic Club; Sixty Years of Quiet Leadership.” *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas*. Vol. II, no.2, (Fall, 1990), 10.

misgivings, and he worked equally hard to carve out a place for Jews in the community at large. As Rabbi Gerald Klein, his successor, after Rabbi Levi Olan, said:

He in a certain sense gave a certain cohesiveness to the American Jewish community. There were people in this community who knew that there was a rabbi, but they didn't (personally) know a rabbi, didn't see a rabbi, didn't listen to a rabbi, didn't sit and eat with a rabbi. He,(Lefkowitz), was a fellow who moved about the community whether it was on the basis of the Rotary Club or fellow pastors.⁵

David Lefkowitz and his wife, Sadie became icons for the Jewish community and the greater Dallas community at large. Both had well-developed senses of humor, perhaps a necessity for living in a goldfish bowl. For example, My father, Irving I. Bock, was the Carrier air conditioning distributor for the Dallas area. When I was born, Lefkowitz visited my mother in the hospital. (The visit was within a month after the rabbi has suffered a heart attack). He told Esther Bock, my mother, that she too, was a "carrier." When my brother, James, was born, at that hospital visit, he told her that she had been "heir conditioned." My mother remembered that he looked chagrined, and then said, "That was not worthy!"⁶

Although Lefkowitz was revered by his congregation, his role in civic affairs in his adopted city must be the reason he is included in the group portrait that hangs in Dallas' City Hall. This biography is designed to capture on paper the life of David Lefkowitz. Thrust at an early age into an orphanage in a strange country, with those around him speaking a foreign language, with only his younger brother Herman for solace, David

⁵ Rabbi Gerald J. Klein, Interview by Jerry Whitus, Dallas, Texas, September, 1972 . Tape recording, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁶Esther Bock. Interview by author, Dallas, Texas, 30 October, 1999.

Lefkowitz learned early that he must sink or swim to survive. This is the story of how well he learned to swim. The story of David Lefkowitz's ministry in Dallas is a study of how one remarkable rabbi, often working behind the scenes in civic projects, steered his congregation through anti-Semitism, and proved to his adopted city that a Jew could be as good a citizen as a member of any other faith.

CHAPTER ONE

BEGINNINGS

The Jewish community of Dallas officially come into being in July, 1872, with the formal establishment of Temple Emanu-El, (God is With Us), the oldest of Dallas' Jewish congregations. This was the same month that Dallas began its transformation from a village established by John Neely Bryan in 1841 to a major railroad terminus on the Trinity River. David Lefkowitz, the rabbi who later came to the city in 1920 to serve as rabbi to Temple Emanu-El, would leave a lasting imprint on both the emerging metropolis and his pulpit.

Dallas needed to a railroad to became a major city. To encourage such a development, in 1872, Captain William H. Gaston persuaded the Texas & Pacific Railroad, (T&P), to come to Dallas by giving it right of way through his four hundred acres southeast of the settlement, an area later to become the city's present-day fairgrounds in order to connect with the Houston and Texas Central Railroad, (HT&C), which was already in Dallas. Gaston also donated the land for the union depot that was build at the intersection of the two railroads.¹ As a result, Dallas became a terminus for the railroads and a city began to develop. With the two railroads, it became a hub for the North Texas region. Merchants and businessmen followed, and the population of Dallas increased after the coming of the railroads from 3,000 to over 7,000 in a matter of

¹Sam Acheson. *Dallas Yesterday*. ed Lee Milazzo. (Dallas: SMU Press, 1977), 37.

months.² The Dallas & Wichita Railroad Company, incorporated in 1871 by the city of Dallas, experienced a delay in construction during the depression of 1873, and work ceased after the money ran out. However, the Jay Gould interests took over the project in 1881 and completed it to Denton. This later became the Dallas-Wichita Falls division of the M-K-T, (Missouri-Kansas-Texas, or “Katy” railroads). The Texas Trunk Railroad received a charter in 1879 and began building from Dallas to Kansas City in 1880. It later became part of the Southern Pacific system, which merged these tracks with the Sabine & East Texas Railroad to form the Texas & New Orleans Railroad, a part of the Southern Pacific lines that extends from Dallas to Beaumont. The Dallas & Cleburne Railroad was also started in 1880, but was sold in 1882 to the Gulf, Colorado, & Santa Fe. Daily train service began, and the line extended north to Paris to connect with the St. Louis & San Francisco. By the time the MKT completed its line from Greenville to Dallas in 1886, Six railroads were in operation in Dallas.³

Among those moving to the Dallas area were a significant number of Jews, primarily from Germany, and by 1872, there were enough to found a congregation. Jewish law requires ten men to form a *minyan*, or prayer group. Accordingly, on July 1, eleven men from Alsace and northern Germany started the Hebrew Benevolent Association, which later developed into Temple Emanu-El, the first Jewish organization

²Local History and Genealogical Society of Dallas, *Memorial and Biographical History of Dallas County, Texas*.(Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company 1893), 819; Acheson, op. cit., 143.

³Maxine Holmes and Gerald Saxon, ed., *The WPA Dallas Guide and History*. Denton: Dallas Public Library; University of North Texas Press, 1992), 138.

in the city. The purposes of this group were to help the sick, to bury the dead, and to hold Jewish religious services. Membership fees were five dollars to join, and monthly dues of one dollar. Membership was open to “any Israelite between the ages of eighteen and sixty years who sustains good character and is approved by the Committee of Investigation. He may become a member by ballot, three black balls rejecting him.”⁴ The group authorized Dr. Emanuel Tillman to buy some land on Akard Street for a burial plot. By 1884, more land was needed, so Alex Sanger, chairman of the cemetery committee, bought and developed property on Hall Street, which, with some additions, remained in use up to the end of the twentieth century.⁵

Before the congregation’s first building was erected, lay leaders conducted services for the tiny congregation in rented rooms at the Masonic Hall on the south side of Commerce Street in what is now downtown Dallas.⁶ As the group lacked a *Torah*, (set of sacred scrolls), it borrowed one from the New Orleans congregation. In 1874, the organization had collected \$150.00 to pay a Rabbi, Heinrich Schwarz of Hempstead, Texas to lead them in services. He conducted services in the Hall of the International Order of B’nai B’rith, (Sons of the Covenant), a Jewish fraternal lodge located above the

⁴*Hebrew Benevolent Association Minute Book*, Box 002, 1 July, 1872. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁵ William H. Greenberg, “The Changing Jewish Community in Dallas.” *The Reform Advocate*, 24 January 1914, 4; *The Dallas Morning News*, 19 February, 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁶*Hebrew Benevolent Association Minute Book*, 13 September, 1873, 85. It was moved and seconded that the president should have control of the service and should choose the individual to lead it. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

Sanger Brothers store.⁷

By 1875, Temple Emanu-El received a charter as a Reform congregation. On Friday evening, October 29, 1875, the group, consisting of nearly fifty members, interviewed two candidates for the position of rabbi, Reverend Rosenspritz, formerly of San Antonio, and Reverend Aron Suhler, formerly of Akron, Ohio. The latter came on the recommendation of Isaac Mayer Wise, the leader of the Reform movement in America. Both delivered sermons for the same Sabbath service in the B'nai B'rith Hall. Rosenspritz wore traditional robes, including a *talith*, (prayer shawl), and a *kippa*, (skullcap). He spoke in English for about forty-five minutes. Suhler wore street clothes and delivered a brief sermon in German. The following morning, the members

⁷*The Dallas Morning News*, 19 February, 1933; Greenberg, 7; Hollace Ava Weiner, "The Mixers: the Role of Rabbis Deep in the Heart of Texas." *American Jewish History* vol 85, no. 3, (September 1997), 297-298; Henry Feingold, ed., *The Jewish People in America*, Vol. 2, *The Second Migration 1820-1880*, by Hasia Diner, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1992), 87; *City Directory of Dallas, 1878-79*, 30; William H. Greenberg, 4. B'nai B'rith began in 1843. A fraternal lodge, it often antedated establishment of congregations in the hinterlands of America. Dallas was no exception. Although B'nai B'rith in Dallas was established in Dallas on 12 November, 1873, the year after the formal establishment of the Hebrew Benevolent Society, since B'nai B'rith was a lodge, and a secular organization, it was not unusual that it would have a permanent building prior to a congregation. Schwarz was the first ordained rabbi to settle permanently in Texas. Ordained in Europe, he emigrated to Hempstead where his two brothers were living. He was tired of his life in Germany, where he was a *schochet* (kosher butcher), and longed for a more scholarly life. He knew his brothers made a comfortable living through their store in Hempstead, and believed there were more marriage prospects for his daughter there than in Germany. He may have been right: his daughter, Clara, married Aron Suhler, Temple Emanu-El's first rabbi, in 1876. Schwarz is the great grandfather of Robert Schwarz Strauss, former chairman of the National Democratic Party and America's last ambassador to the Soviet Union.

elected Suhler to the post by a nearly unanimous vote.⁸ Suhler remained with Temple Emanu-El four years. While he served the Temple as rabbi, he also edited a weekly German newspaper, *The Texas Volksblatt*. Charles Alterman, continued to publish it for a few years after Suhler left Dallas in 1879.⁹ By 1876, the group had its first permanent building on the corner of Field and Commerce streets, a small, red, brick structure.¹⁰

After Suhler's departure, the congregation next elected the Reverend Hermann M. Bien of Portland, Oregon, who remained until 1882, when Rabbi Henry Schul of Cincinnati assumed the pulpit. Part of the congregation found him unacceptable, charging that he lacked credentials as he did not have rabbinical training., and broke away from the temple. The dissenters held their own services for the High Holy Days in 1883 in a rented B'nai B'rith Hall, and hired Rabbi David Philipson, one of the first four graduates of Hebrew Union College, to officiate. The group returned to Temple Emanu-

⁸*The American Israelite*, 12 November, 1875. This newspaper was owned and published by Isaac Mayer Wise, who started it 1854. It was one of several newspapers either owned or edited by rabbis that enabled Jews living in different areas to communicate with each other. These periodicals covered national and international events, published fiction, and emphasized the unity of the Jewish people. Jewish communities in need of money to build a synagogue or to purchase a *Torah*, for example, often appealed directly to Jews in more fortunate circumstances for help, and editors often added requests for assistance with their own statements of support. The citation does not include Rosenspritz' first name.

⁹*City Directory of Dallas, 1878-79*, 40. Since Dallas had three German Protestant churches, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Methodist Episcopal, a German American Academy and a German School in Dallas at this time, *The Texas Volksblatt* served a fairly wide group of people. No copies of it from this period have survived. After he left Dallas, Suhler assumed the pulpit in Vicksburg, Mississippi for a time. Sol Kory, the brother of Sadie Lefkowitz later held this post. Suhler later returned to Dallas and went into the cigar business. He died in Waco, where he is buried.

¹⁰Ruthe Weinberger and Cathey Schechter. *Deep in the Heart: The Lives and Legends of Texas Jews*. (Austin: Eakin Press, 1992), 60; *The Dallas Morning News*, 19 October 1972. According to the article, the building cost \$15,000.

El the following year, upon the departure of Schul, with the election of Dr. Edward Chapman as the spiritual leader of the congregation.¹¹ Chapman remained with the Temple for twelve years, resigning due to ill health in 1896. In 1897, the congregation selected George A. Kohut of New York to serve as their rabbi. During his term, the congregation unanimously accepted the *Union Prayerbook* prepared and published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the governing body of Reform rabbis. By then, the *Union Prayerbook* was in use in nearly every Reform temple in America.¹² The congregation grew so rapidly that a larger facility was needed. On November 20, 1899, Rabbi Kohut dedicated that new temple building at the corner of Ervay and St. Louis Streets.

When illness forced Rabbi Kohut to resign in 1900, the congregation replaced him with Oscar J. Cohan of Mobile, Alabama, but he died on April 26, 1901. Temple Emanu-El advertized in *the American Israelite* for a rabbi. The temple offered a salary of \$2,100 a year, and offered to pay the traveling expenses of the candidate who was successful.¹³ The congregation chose William H. Greenberg for the post. At the time, he

¹¹David Philipson, *My Life as an American Jew: An Autobiography*. (Cincinnati: John G. Kidd & Son, Inc, 1942), 25. Philipson officiated at the wedding of David and Sadie Braum Lefkowitz. Greenberg, op. Cit., 11. Greenberg writes that the dissenters founded A new congregation called Ahavas Sholom, (Love of Peace), but the only reference to any Hebrew organization bearing the name listed in the *City Directory* for either 1883 or 1884 is a B'nai B'rith lodge, #396, founded 13 January 1884. It is possible that the dissenters, realizing they would be unable to start a new congregation, contented themselves with a lodge separate from the original group.

¹²Greenberg, 22.

¹³D. A. Eldridge to Congregation Temple Emanu-El, 21 June, 1899. *Correspondence Book, 1898-1906*. Temple Emanu-El. Archives, box 015.

was serving as the rabbi in Sacramento, California. For some years, Alex Sanger had tried to persuade Greenberg to leave his pulpits, first in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and later in Sacramento for the job in Dallas. He finally succeeded. Greenberg came to Dallas in 1901 and remained in Dallas until his resignation in 1919.¹⁴ Greenberg, a native of London, England, was a dynamic man who created the type of activist congregation which would later embrace David Lefkowitz. William Greenberg envisioned the temple as the center of Jewish life and Jewish activities, a philosophy he brought with him to Dallas. In addition to his rabbinical duties, Greenberg, an accomplished violinist, was one of the founders of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and also held a Ph.D. from the University of Heidelberg. Among his civic activities, he became a member of the Dallas Free Kindergarten Association, the Anti-Tuberculosis Society, and became vice-president of the Dallas Humane Society upon its establishment. In addition, at the time of his departure from Dallas, Greenberg was a national vice-president of the British-French-Belgium Permanent Relief Society for the aid of soldiers permanently blinded in action during the Great War. He was also chairman of the local Soldiers' Club. Greenberg, along with George Dealey, then vice president and manager of *the Dallas Morning News* and Cesar Maurice Lombardi, another officer at the newspaper, founded the Critic Club, and was the organizer of a city-wide Thanksgiving Day Service.¹⁵

¹⁴William H. Greenberg, "Autobiographical Sketch of William H. Greenberg." Unpublished manuscript, 28 March, 1948. Temple Emanu-El, Archives, box 045, 10, 22.

¹⁵Ibid., 16; *The Jewish Monitor*, 18 August, 1919.

The Critic Club of Sacramento, an intellectual discussion group composed of physicians, bankers, educators and other community leaders had been an important part of Greenberg's life when he lived there, and he began a similar one in Dallas to meet the same needs.¹⁶ The Critic Club began in 1908, and continued to hold meetings for another sixty years. Members of the Critic Club unanimously elected David Lefkowitz, Greenberg's successor, to join them in April, 1920, prior to Lefkowitz' move to Dallas.¹⁷ Members of the Critic club were among the city's opinion makers, and the club served as a forum where new ideals might be discussed. Since the members were all men of importance in the city., the Critic Club's influence was considerable.¹⁸

Blanche Kahn Greenberg, the rabbi's wife, also took an active role in the temple and the Dallas community. A native of New Orleans, she taught kindergarten and was an accomplished organist and pianist. Her marriage to Greenberg in 1908 brought her to Dallas, where she became the director of the Dallas Free Kindergarten Association. Through this organization, she recognized the needs of the poor children of the city. In April, 1913, meeting with a group of men and women, she helped found the Dallas

¹⁶Greenberg, op. cit., 17

¹⁷ Michael V. Hazel, "The Critic Club: Sixty Years of Quiet Leadership." *Legacies: A History for Dallas and North Central Texas*. Vol. 2, no.2. (Fall 1990): 9. Minutes, Dallas Critic Club, 15 April, 1920. Critic Club Papers, box A6354, Dallas Historical Society Archives. The minutes do not explain Lefkowitz' election; it is possible that possible that Lefkowitz' reputation as a dynamic citizen of Dayton, Ohio and the fact that he was a member of similar club there were reasons for his immediate acceptance into the group. It is also possible that Lefkowitz was automatically invited to join because of Greenberg.

¹⁸ Hazel, 9

Infants' Welfare and Milk Association.¹⁹ Mrs. Greenberg was a co-founder of the Council of Jewish Women of Dallas, and was a charter member of the Dallas Suffragette Association during World War I. She was also a member of the Dallas Food Conservation Board, a director of the Red Cross Drive, the Liberty Loan Drive, and the YMCA. After she left Dallas, along with her husband and her daughter, Edith, she taught at the New York School of Social Work and later conducted classes in education and social work at New York University.²⁰

In 1910, Rabbi Greenberg organized the guild of Temple Emanu-El. Its purpose was to be an umbrella organization for educational and social work, musicales, and receptions, sewing and Bible studies. In 1911, the Hebrew Benevolent society merged with other local Jewish charities and evolved into the Federated Jewish Charities. This was a free loan society, charging no interest on loans it gave, and oversaw charitable work done by the synagogues. When World War I broke out, the Federated Charities began to coordinate their work with the Jewish Welfare Board for the benefit of Jewish servicemen. In 1919, Emil Corenbeth started a new chapter of the Young Men's Hebrew Association, (YMHA), the forerunner of the Jewish Community Center.²¹

¹⁹Elizabeth York Engstrom, "The Forgotten Frontier." *Legacies*, Vol. 1, no. 1, (Spring, 1989), 23.

²⁰Blanche Kahn Greenberg box 046, Temple Emanu-El Archives; Annual Report, Temple Emanu-El Board of Directors, 1913; William Greenberg to Congregation Temple Emanu-El, 13 June, 1914. Temple Emanu-El Archives. The National Council of Jewish Women, created in 1893, was the first national organization to unite Jewish women to promote their religion. Founders of this group identified themselves with the Reform branch of Judaism. In its early days, the Council began penny lunches in the Dallas public schools.

²¹Pat Kleinman. "A Glance at Federation's History for 50 Years." *Federation News*, Vol. 14, no. 12, (November 1950), 4.

An earlier YMHA, organized in 1880, had developed into the Phoenix Club by 1890. By 1905, it had further evolved into the Columbian Club, a private Jewish social club that began presenting debutantes to Jewish society. While the third temple building was under construction, the Columbian Club let Temple Emanu-El use its auditorium and rooms for classes.²²

Through its members, Temple Emanu-El became well-known in Dallas. For example, Alex Sanger, one of the founders of the congregation, and its second president, was the chairman of the T & P's railroad finance committee. He helped organize Dallas' Volunteer Fire Department and served as president of the Dallas Steam Fire engine Company, No. 1. Sanger also was instrumental in the creation of the State Fair of Texas, was elected to the city's Board of Aldermen, and was the first Jew to serve on the Board of Regents for the University of Texas. During World War I, Sanger was also a member of the General Advisory Committee, the Dallas County Loan Committee, served as chairman of the Dallas Food Conservation Board, and was active in Liberty Bond Drives, which promoted the sale of Liberty Bond Stamps. Indicative of his prominence, a Dallas branch library and an elementary school are named for him. The Santa Fe Railroad named the town of Sanger, in Denton County after him and his family probably because their retail stores brought business to the trains; customers boarded them to shop at the

²²*The Daily Times Herald*, 29 May, 1932; Holmes and Saxon, 279; minutes, Temple Emanu-El Board of Directors meeting, 9 October, 1917. Temple Emanu-El Archives. *The Jewish Record*, 28 November, 1924; 27 November, 1925. On these last two dates, Blanche Mittenthal, the future wife of Lewis Lefkowitz, David and Sadie Lefkowitz' oldest son and Helen Lefkowitz, their only daughter, made their respective bows to Jewish society at their debutante balls at the Columbian Club.

Sanger Brothers stores in Dallas and Waco. Sanger choose the inscription on the facade of the auditorium at Fair Park. They were the words on the opera house in his boyhood town of Mannheim, Germany: “Dedicated to the True, the Good, and the Beautiful.”²³

From the beginning, the leaders of Temple Emanu-El concerned themselves with projects benefitting the city as a whole. In 1874, public schools had not yet been established in Dallas. Rabbi Suhler recognized the need for quality education for the city’s children. With the full co-operation of his congregation he established a coeducational school, The School of Temple Emanu-El. Open to both Jewish and non-Jewish children on an equal basis, students whose families could not meet the tuition could attend nevertheless, regardless of their religion. The school held classes on the second floor of a furniture store on Main Street between Lamar and Austin Streets until 1877, when the temple acquired its first permanent building on the south side of the corner of Ervay and Field Streets. Although Rabbi Suhler was the school’s first principal, some of the teachers were not Jewish, including the last principal, Mrs. Laura Dake. At its peak, the academy’s enrollment consisted of sixty boys and seventy girls. The school

²³Weingarten and Schecher, 5; *Dallas Daily Times Herald* 13 September, 1925; *The Dallas Morning News*, 14 September, 1925; Leon Joseph Rosenberg, *Sangers: Pioneer Texas Merchants*. (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1978), 80-81; Local History Genealogical Society, 709; George Henry Santerre, *Dallas’ First Hundred Years*. (Dallas: Book Craft, 1965), 8; Mrs. Lewis B. Lefkowitz, “Civic Achievements of Dallas” *Pictures of Jews Life: Dallas from 1872 to 1955*. (Dallas: National Council of Jewish Women, n. p. 1955), 19; *City Directory of Dallas, 18890-1881*, 46. Eunice Sullivan Gray, “Sanger, Texas.” *The New Handbook of Texas*. ed. Ron Tyler. (Austin: Texas State Historical Society, 1996), Vol. 5, 852.

closed in 1886.²⁴

Another prominent city leader and member of Temple Emanu-El was Dr. Emanuel Tillman, the first secretary of the Dallas public school system. Tillman was a chemist who had earned a Ph.D. at the University of Heidelberg in 1856. He emigrated to the United States and settled in Natchez, Mississippi, where he became an assistant state geologist. After ill health forced him to leave Natchez, he moved to Dallas where he went into the wholesale liquor business. In addition to his duties with the public schools, Tillman was an early member of the Dallas city council, and was a 32nd degree Mason. Tillman also served as the secretary for the Scottish Rite Bodies.²⁵

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Jews from Eastern Europe, especially Russia, began to come to America in ever increasing numbers. The tzarist regime was increasing its anti-Jewish activity in order to divert the peasants' attention away from chronic economic problems. Tzar Nicholas II, who ruled Russia until the Russian Revolution in 1917, and his government subsidized nearly three thousand anti-Jewish publications, including the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a fictitious account depicting a world-wide Jewish conspiracy. In addition, the May Laws went into effect which forbade Jews to own or rent land outside towns and cities, and discouraged them from living in villages. Consequently, at least 500,000 Jews were driven from their homes to the Pale of

²⁴Acheson, 335; Gerry Cristol, "Temple Emanu-El, Dallas." *The Handbook of Texas*, Vol. 5, 250; Holmes and Saxon, 185.

²⁵Greenberg, 4; Santerre, 8.

Settlement, the fifteen western provinces of Eastern Russia and the ten provinces of Russian-held Poland. Jews with money or family connections somehow managed to remain in Europe, but the poorest ones had no choice but to leave. Most came to America.²⁶

The Russian Jews rejected the innovations of the Reformers, and wished to continue to worship in the manner of their forefathers. Some of them migrated to Dallas. Speaking a different language than the Reformers, and differing from them in all respects except the umbrella of Judaism, they desired a synagogue of their own. Until March, 1884, the Orthodox Jews of Dallas maintained a *minyan* only for the High Holy Days, *Rosh Hashonah*, the New Year, and *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. On the first of March, 1884, Isaac J. Emin, Lewis Levy, and Michael Wasserman met at Wasserman's clothing store at 1206 Elm Street to found a new Jewish congregation in Dallas. They decided to call it Shaarith Israel, (Remnant of Israel). This name comes from the prophet Zephaniah 3:13; "the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity." On April 2, 1886, the group, consisting of twenty members applied to the secretary of state for the state of Texas for a charter for the purposes of establishing a synagogue and a the maintenance of a cemetery. The first services were held above the Bradford Grocery Store and the synagogue

²⁶Henry Feingold, ed., *The Jewish People in America* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1992), *A Time for Building: The Third Migration* by Gerald Sorin, 172-173; Arthur Herzberg, *The Jews in America: Four Centuries of an Uneasy Encounter; A History*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 153; Stephen Birmingham, *The Rest of Us: The Rise of Eastern European Jews*. (Boston: Little, Brown and co., 1984), 37.

became the focal point for Orthodox Jews in North Texas.²⁷

Prior to the turn of the century, another Orthodox congregation developed. A group of Jews from Eastern Europe immigrated to Dallas, but were too poor to live in South Dallas, the area of choice for most of Dallas' Jewry, Reform or Orthodox. They settled in an area called "Frogtown," because of the number of frogs that appeared after the rain. It was bordered by McKinney Avenue on the East, by the MKT on the west, and by Pearl Street on the north. Frogtown was later to evolve into "Little Mexico," Dallas' largest *barrio*.²⁸

These people lived too far from Shaarith Israel to walk there, and according to strict interpretation of Jewish law, were forbidden to ride on the Sabbath; therefore they formed their own congregation. On March 15, 1890, the secretary of state for the state of Texas granted a charter for Tifereth Israel (Glory of Israel). The most traditional of the three Dallas congregations, this was the only one with separate doors for men and women. Men sat in a area before the *Torah* and the women sat behind them. A *m'chitzha*, or curtain, marked the division between them. For the first three years,

²⁷John Rogers, *The Lusty Texas of Dallas*. (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company Inc., 1960), 298; Mrs. I. Zesmer, *The Golden Book of Shearith Israel, Commemorating the Congregation's Fiftieth Anniversary, 1884-1934*. (Dallas: Congregation Shearith Israel, 1935), 11; National Council of Jewish Women, Dallas Section, *Pictures of Jewish Life in Dallas, Congregation Shearith Israel* by Bertha Glick Newman, 3; *City Directory Of Dallas, 1886-1887*. *The Jewish Monitor*, 26 November, 1920. In 1920, men and women began to sit together in the Shearith Israel's new building, contrary to Orthodox tradition. At this time, the congregation also formally changed the spelling of its name to Shearith Israel.

²⁸Jane Guzman, "Dallas Barrio Women of Power." (M. A. thesis, University of North Texas, 1992), 16; Holmes and Saxon, 306.

services were held at the home of Jacob Donsky, at 132 Caroline Street, but by 1893, the congregation was able to buy a lot at 145 Highland Street, later Akard Street, where they build their first synagogue. Frank Beyers conducted the services until a rabbi could be hired. By 1920, the congregation had purchased a lot on the corner of Cedar Springs Road and Harwood Street, where they would build their second synagogue.²⁹

Another group of Jews, primarily from Austria and Roumania, also lived in Frogtown, but disliked the Askenasic, or northern European ritual at Tifereth Israel, so in 1909, they started a another congregation, “First Roumanian and Austrian Benevolent Society,” or Congregation Roumanien Destreichche. Later the group changed the name to Congregation Anshe Sephard, whihc means People of the Sephardic Ritual.

Sephardim are the descendants of the Jews who were exiled form Spain in 1492. This new synagogue held services at 178 Caroline Street before they moved to a building on Alamo Street. In 1919, the congregation bought another building on the corner of Browder and Pocahantas Streets.³⁰

Russian Jews arrived in the United States in ever increasing numbers as the nineteenth century drew to a close, and the vast majority of them settled in New York. By the turn of the century, squalid slums appeared in Jewish neighborhoods along the eastern seaboard. They posed a problem for the assimilated German Jews, who recognized a

²⁹Allen Rubin, ed., *Congregation Tifereth Israel Celebrating 1900 Years, 1890-1990*. (Dallas: Congregation Tifereth Israel, n. p. 1990), 10; Glickman, 5; *The Jewish Monitor*, 26 November, 1920.

³⁰Newman, 5-6; Holmes and Saxon, 178; *City Directory*, 1893, 1890; *The Jewish Monitor*, 26 November, 1920. The earliest record of the Roumanian Destreichche is in the 1909 *City Directory*.

responsibility of care for their fellow Jews, but worried how these recent arrivals might create an anti-Jewish reaction among non-Jewish Americans. A wave of anti-Semitism spread through America; the most notorious of which was the refusal of the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga springs to allow Joseph Seligman, a German-Jewish banker and friend of Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant to register as a guest in 1877.³¹ After 1880, Yankee ancestry increasingly became a condition for respectability, and the old society sought refuge in exclusive clubs and resorts, where religious discrimination became common practice. By 1924, the year Congress passed a strict immigration quotas, religious discrimination was commonplace in neighborhoods private boarding schools, clubs, and resorts, and was growing where ever Jews turned up in large numbers, including elitist Eastern colleges. Jews have traditionally placed a high value on education, and by 1920, colleges had enrolled large numbers of Jewish students. To circumvent this, selective Eastern colleges began a system of regional distribution schemes for acceptance. Since the majority of Jews lived in New York and the northeast, this lessened the number of Jews who would be admitted to these colleges.³²

German Jewish leaders became convinced that the best way to defuse popular support for immigration restriction and anti-Semitism was to disperse the Jewish immigrants throughout the country. Jacob Schiff, the undisputed leader of this group, and head of the

³¹Leonard Dinnerstein, *Anti-Semitism in America*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 39.

³²Stephen Steinberg, "How Jewish Quotas Began." *Commentary* Vol. 52, no.3, (September 1971):68-69.

banking firm of Kuhn, Loeb, and company, instrumental in financing several American railroads, and in floating loans for American and foreign governments, was determined to find a solution to the problem the Russian Jews presented. During the Russo-Japanese War, Schiff had taken the lead in underwriting a Japanese bond issue of two hundred million dollars to help defeat the Tzarist government that was tormenting its Jews. In 1903, *pogroms*, (government-sponsored persecution of the Jews), began again in Russia, bringing more Jewish immigrants to American shores. It seemed to the older Jewish community that these new arrivals all came to New York. Schiff believed something had to be done to steer them to other locales.

Oscar Strauss, another prominent German Jew, served as secretary of Labor and Commerce in the Theodore Roosevelt administration. Immigration fell under his jurisdiction. Schiff and Strauss worked together with Israel Zangwell, a British writer and founder of the Jewish Territorial Organization, (JTO), who was determined to save the Russian Jews by helping them find a safe haven.³³

The three men decided that Galveston, Texas provided the ideal port to which the Russian Jews should be diverted, partially because it was already served by the North German Line out of Bremen,, but also because Galveston, served by a railroad network that spread over the proposed area of settlement was a small town, located on an island; hence, these newcomers would be unable to settle there and create a “Lower East Side in

³³Sorin, 61-65; Bernard Marinbach, *Galveston: Ellis Island of the West*. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 1-20; Gary Dean Best, “Jacob Schiff’s Movement; an Experiment in Immigrant Deflection,” *American Jewish Archives* XX (1987), 43-49; Jane Manaster, “Galveston Movement,” *The New Handbook of Texas* ed. Ron Tyler. (Austin: Texas State Historical Society, 1996), Vo. 2, 67.

Texas.”³⁴

Congress has to provide legislation for an immigration station to be erected at Galveston before the project could begin. Senator Charles A. Culbertson of Texas introduced a bill on the floor of the U. S. Senate on February 7, 1907, to create such a station. One day later, Congressman Thomas A. Gregg of Texas introduced a similar bill in the House of Representatives. The Senate bill was referred to the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, and then referred back to the Senate, where it passed on February 15. The bill passed the house on March 2, and passed the Senate again the next day. President Roosevelt approved it the following day. The station opened on July 1, 1907. Until war broke out in Europe in 1914, immigration continued, allowing approximately ten thousand Jews to arrive in America through this Texas port.³⁵

During the years of the Galveston movement and until the 1920s, membership at Temple Emanu-El did not grow appreciably, despite the arrival in Dallas of new Jewish immigrants coming in through Galveston. The most probable explanation is that these later arrivals were traditional Jews who were not interested in new forms of worship. The chasm between the two groups of Jews, Reform and Orthodox, was as great in Dallas as elsewhere. There was little or no social contact between the two groups, despite the fact that they lived in the same neighborhood, South Dallas.³⁶

³⁴Best, 49-52; Marinbach, 21-30.

³⁵*Congressional Record*, 57th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1907. H/ Doc.25469, S .Doc.8327; Marinbach, 189; Ann Nathan and Harry I. Cohen, *The Man Who Stayed in Texas*. (New York: Whittlesley House, 1942), 189-212; Weingarten and Schechter, 84.

³⁶Minnie Marcus, interview with Ginger Jacobs. Tape recording, Dallas Jewish Historical Society Archives, 20 February 1975; Sorin, 164, 166, 193.

Greenberg stayed at the temple throughout the war years, while the congregation erected a new building. The previous one on Ervay Street proved inadequate, despite the slow growth of members. Since Greenberg initiated so many new programs the congregants believed they needed more space. The new edifice, which served Temple Emanu-El throughout the Lefkowitz years, stood on the corner of Harwood and South Boulevard. Greenberg resigned over a contract dispute with the board of directors and for over a year, the temple was without a spiritual leader.³⁷

Temple Emanu-El hired David Lefkowitz in 1920, and he remained in Dallas, and at his pulpit until his death in 1955. Lefkowitz was born April 11, 1875, in Epries, in the Austro-Hungarian empire, in 1879. His father, Benjamin, died in 1879, and an older brother and sister emigrated to America. In 1881, when young David was seven, his widowed mother, Lena Greenstein Lefkowitz brought him and his two other brothers, one younger and one older, to America. When she arrived in New York city, she was unable to maintain her large family, so she placed David and Herman, the youngest of her children, in the Hebrew Orphan Asylum (HOA). David Lefkowitz lived there throughout his student years. He remained there while he attended the City College of New York.³⁸ This orphanage and other Jewish orphanages in America were under the auspices of the

³⁷Minutes, Board of of Directors meetings, Temple Emanu-El, 26 March, 1918; 28 April 1918; 7 May, 1918; 2 June, 1918; 21 November, 1918; 8 January, 1919; 9 January, 1919. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³⁸Rabbi Gerald Klein, "The Lefkowitz Years: A Memoir and an Attempt to Contribute to the Historical Record." (Dallas: n. p., 1990), 4-5.

German Jews, and therefore, had a distinctly Reform approach to Judaism³⁹ HOA children attended a “Home School” for their first six years, since the local public school was overcrowded. Non-Jewish children living in the neighborhood were permitted to attend the Home School, which the city of New York supervised. After the sixth grade, HOA children went to local public schools, and often to City College for higher education. The Reformers vigorously supported public education for Jewish children, especially ones of Eastern European origin, as the surest way of Americanizing these youngsters. The orphanages sought to instill respectable middle-class values and civic pride in the young people under their care.⁴⁰ Since the HOA was the only home he knew, the young David Lefkowitz took the lessons he was taught there to heart, rather like a young boy sent off to a monastery during the middle Ages: he spent his life following the rules he learned as a lad.⁴¹

Lefkowitz earned a Bachelor of Science degree at the City College and taught there for two years. He was interested in art, and studied at the Art Students’ League, but one of his teachers, Dr. Herman Barr somehow steered him toward the rabbinate. Consequently, in the fall of 1896, he left for Cincinnati, and the Hebrew Union College,

³⁹Reesa Sigman Friedman, *These are our Children: Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1885-1925*. (Hanover: University of New England Press, 1994), 132.

⁴⁰Ibid., 99.

⁴¹Hyman Bogen. *The Luckiest Orphans: A History of the Hebrew Orphans’ Asylum in New York*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 51. As a young man, Lefkowitz was working in the HOA during a vacation from college as a supervisor of children. One day a teacher brought a new boy, frightened by his surroundings, in to see David Lefkowitz. He was able to calm the youngster down so that he was able to join the others.

the Reform seminary founded by Isaac Mayer Wise, the father of American Reform Judaism.⁴²

While he attended the seminary, Lefkowitz also attended the University of Cincinnati. In 1900, Isaac Mayer Wise presented him with his *simicha*, or rabbinical certificate. Lefkowitz graduated in the last class to receive diplomas from Wise, who died shortly after the ceremony held in his home.⁴³ The same year Lefkowitz graduated from the University of Cincinnati, where he had been a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Following his ordination, he served as rabbi for Temple B'nai Yeshurun (Sons of the Righteous), in Dayton, Ohio. On October 19, 1901, Lefkowitz married Sadie Brahm of Cincinnati, whom he had met in college, on October 19, 1901. Their union proved to be a long and happy one, lasting fifty-four years until Sadie's death in February, 1955. They had four children while they lived in Dayton: Lewis, Harry, Helen, and David Jr. who became a rabbi and assisted his father in Dallas until he got his own pulpit in Shreveport, Louisiana at Temple B'nai Zion (Sons of Zion).

While in Dayton, Lefkowitz, following the teachings he received at the HOA, became a model citizen. In addition to his pastoral duties, he became an active part of the greater community. He served as president of the Humane Society, and was the first president of the Dayton chapter of the American Red Cross, in addition to serving on the

⁴²Klein, 5; Friedman, 124. One of the aims of the Jewish orphanages was to recruit candidates for the Reform rabbinate. The Hebrew Union College, (HUC), offered scholarships to worthy alumni of these institutions.

⁴³David Lefkowitz, Jr., "Biography of David Lefkowitz, Sr." Personal folder, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

Executive Board of the local Red Cross. He preached in churches of all denominations and the Dayton YMCA regarded him so highly that it urged him to go overseas during the Great War to help straighten out that Christian agency on the front.⁴⁴

In 1913 when a flood devastated Dayton, Lefkowitz was in charge of one of the districts outside the flooded area. He helped 28,000 refugees of the disaster find shelter, and he established a bread line to feed them. Everyone received aid, regardless of his religion. The city's leaders were unprepared to deal with this crisis, and Lefkowitz became convinced that the new city-manager form of government was the best way for a municipality to handle crises, as well as ordinary business. He took an active role in supporting the concept in Dayton. His wife, Sadie, also active in the community, started and served as president of the Visiting Nurse Association in Dayton; she would later do the same in Dallas.⁴⁵

When Temple Emanu-El in Dallas needed a rabbi, its Board of Directors appointed a search committee, headed by Herbert Marcus, the congregation's president, and one of the founders of Neiman-Marcus. The search committee identified four possible candidates, and David Lefkowitz emerged as the best choice. Consequently, the Board invited Rabbi and Mrs. Lefkowitz to visit Dallas. Marcus appointed a committee to

⁴⁴*The Jewish Monitor*, 26 March, 1920.

⁴⁵Klein, 5, David Lefkowitz to Rabbi Samuel S. Meyersberg, Dayton, Ohio, 8 December, 1920; Edgar Siskin, Cincinnati, Ohio, 10 February 1926; to E. L. Wells, Marshall, Texas, 3 May, 1927; Temple Emanu-El Archives, David Lefkowitz, address to the Critic Club, "The City Manager Form of Government in Dallas," 4 May, 1927, Critic Club papers, box A6667, Dallas Historical Society Archives, Freda Gail Stern, "The Visiting Nurse Association," *Dallas Jewish Life*, (March, 1993), 5

entertain the rabbi as well as a committee of ten ladies to entertain his wife during their ten day visit to Dallas and Temple Emanu-El. The group that met them upon their arrival consisted of several past presidents of the congregation, including Alex Sanger, Rudolph Liebman, and Emanuel M. Kahn. During the visit, the board of Directors called a special meeting and told him that if he assumed the pulpit in Dallas, he would receive \$10,000 annually as his salary. The citizens of Dayton, Jews and Christians alike, banded together to frame a petition requesting that he remain in there as rabbi, and they added they would support any program with which he might be involved. In fact, forty-seven non-Jews offered to join his congregation if he would remain in Dayton.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Lefkowitz, who had turned down earlier offers from other congregations, including the pulpit in Boston, accepted the invitation of Temple Emanu-El. He gave his reasons in an interview for *The Jewish Monitor*, a weekly Jewish newspaper serving the Dallas-Fort Worth area. He said:

My decision was not prompted by financial dissatisfaction. The local congregation proposed not only to give me the same amount of money offered me by the Dallas congregation, but also promised to erect a new temple within two years, should I decide to stay. I made my decision in favor of Dallas, because of the wonderful opportunities for service in a growing community with a Jewish population double the congregation in Dayton. The congregation there has promised me faithful cooperation in anything I shall attempt in my congregational affairs, and I see a wonderful opportunity for unlimited service in the great Texas empire.⁴⁷

⁴⁶*The Dallas Morning News*, 2 April, 1940. The article does not give its source for this information. Perhaps family members told the reporter this story in an interview.

⁴⁷*The Jewish Monitor*, 26 March, 1920.

CHAPTER 2

THE TWENTIES

During the Great War, nativism spread in the United States, and anti-German sentiment was rampant. A byproduct of this mood was a growing anti-Semitism, especially since the wealthier and more prominent Jews living in America at this time were of German background. After the war, Jewish Socialists and Communists like Leon Trotsky promoted the image of the Jew as a subversive radical. Stories circulated that every new Jewish immigrant might be a revolutionary. An anti-immigration movement began building in the nation that would culminate with the passage of the Johnson Act in 1924, the most restrictive immigration legislation passed up to that time by the United States.

The Jewish Reform movement's thrust had always been toward assimilation, with the idea that anti-Semitism would fade away as the Christian majority came to realize that Jews, at least the Reformers, were much like themselves, albeit with a different outlook on religion. As early as 1899, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, (CCAR), the organization of Reform clergy in America, issued a proclamation at the annual meeting that "America is our Palestine and Washington our Zion."¹ Years later, after the Balfour Declaration in 1917 that set aside part of Palestine for a homeland for Jews, the CCAR issued a statement in which they announced that although they appreciated the opportunity for Jews who wished to emigrate to Palestine, if compelled by either

¹ *Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook*, 1889, 169.

economic necessity or religious persecution, they objected to the idea of Palestine becoming a national homeland for the Jewish people. They believed that Jews should be at home in all countries and that Jews in America were an integral part of the American nation.² For this reason, the Reform rabbinate, including David Lefkowitz, opposed “political Zionism,” the movement to establish a Jewish state, although he took an active role in raising money for Palestine.³

The CCAR stressed assimilation throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the next one. This second generation of American Jews, were irresistibly drawn to American values and ideals. Theirs was a headlong rush to Americanize.⁴ For example, they vigorously supported the public schools, which they viewed as an excellent vehicle for their ultimate goal, Americanization. Lefkowitz was a member of this generation.⁵

Perhaps the best example of the Reformers’ desire to prove themselves good, loyal Americans was their reaction to Prohibition. Although the Eighteenth Amendment,

² CCAR *Yearbook*, 1918, 175.

³ *The Jewish Record*, 11 May, 1926. David Lefkowitz, Jr., interview by Ginger Jacobs, 27 January, 1980, tape recording, Dallas Jewish Historical Society Archives. David Lefkowitz, Sr. addressed the Beaumont Jewish Community on behalf of the United Palestine Appeal and the United Jewish Campaign. There are a number of similar examples of this type of activity. According to his son, David Jr., he was “supportive of the humanitarian aspects of the Israeli experience.” In a letter to Rabbi M. Abramson, Galveston, Texas, 8 May, 1922, Lefkowitz agreed to write a letter to the general Jewish community in Texas to raise money for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. (HIAS).

⁴ Feingold, Henry. ed. *History of the Jewish People in America*, vol .4, *A Time for Searching: Entering the Mainstream, 1920-1945*. University Press 1992), 36.

⁵ Naomi W. Cohen, *Jews in Christian America: The Pursuit of Religious Equality*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 115.

adopted in 1919, forbade the sale or manufacture of intoxicating liquors, Article 7 of the Volstead Act, the implementation of the amendment, exempted the production and sale of wine for sacramental purposes. A lively trade began in the sale of such beverages. By August of 1921, two new businesses catering to this need advertized in *The Jewish Monitor*.⁶ Perhaps because some rabbis (and so-called rabbis) were notorious for violating the Volstead Act by selling wine to non-Jews as well, the CCAR made it clear that its members were to abstain from alcoholic beverages altogether, noting that

a considerable number of persons in many parts of the country who have called themselves rabbis, though frequently without rabbinical training have organized congregations and, under the law, were entitled to secure wine for distribution to their members. As a result, more than one scandal has arisen and if the law continues in force, it is entirely likely that there will be further abuses of the privilege granted to rabbis by the government. The result will be a *Hillul-ha-Shem*, (Desecration of God's name), and the vast majority of our people who are entirely innocent will suffer shame through the faults of those who are guilty. This situation must, if possible, be prevented...we as a Conference, believing that according to the principles of Reform Judaism and even according to traditional Jewish law, it is permissible in case of necessity to use unfermented wine for all religious purposes... in the spirit of the laws of our country, the Central Conference of American Rabbis has recommended the use of unfermented wine for all religious purposes.⁷

The situation had deteriorated to the point that finally, the CCAR and the United

⁶ *The Jewish Monitor*, 15 April, 1921, 5 August, 1921. In the issue for 31 March, 1922, Reverend A. Fram, the rabbi at Shearith Israel, announced he was importing wines from Palestine for Passover observances.

⁷ Leo Sack, "The Sacramental Wine Scandal, *The American Hebrew*, 20 March, 1925, 571, 579; CCAR, *Yearbook*, 1921, 117- 118. CCAR members took this decision seriously. David Philipson, *My Life as an American Jew: An Autobiography*. (Cincinnati: John J. Kidd & Sons, Inc., 1941): 307. Philipson described in detail his "shocked amazement" at a dinner in 1921 when he saw a "member of the United States Senate pull a bottle from somewhere and drink his fill."

Synagogue of America, the organization of the Orthodox rabbinate, went on record stating that fermented wine was not necessary for use in Jewish rituals, and so far as both groups were concerned, the exemption of sacramental wine in the prohibition law might be repealed. In addition, the president of the International Order of B'nai B'rith recommended that Jewish organizations petition Congress for a repeal of the "scandalous exemption in the name of Jewish decency and honor." Lefkowitz, obeyed this ruling, as he would follow all suggestions of the CCAR, albeit not without some regret. In a letter to a colleague in Montreal, a few years after his move to Dallas, Lefkowitz hoped his friend will "take a drink for him of good old beer, stout, or Scotch."⁸

Dallas, the city that would become home to the family of David and Sadie Lefkowitz, and eventually three of their four children, was clearly a city on the move. By December of 1919, Dallas ranked second among all southern cities in bank deposits. Ten thousand telephones were in the city, which gave it the claim of having the greatest telephone development per capita of any city in the world. Eight trunk line steam railroads radiated from Dallas in twenty-seven directions. Dallas shipped more galvanized corrugated tanks to oil fields than any other American city and at that time led the world in the manufacture and distribution of saddlery, harness, and cotton gin machinery. Dallas led the region as a distributor of dry goods, motor trucks, paper, tubes and accessories, musical goods, building materials, heavy hardware, jewelry, and optical goods, sporting goods, soda fountains, electrical goods and many other items. Dallas was the leading

⁸ David Lefkowitz to Rabbi M. J. Merritt, Montreal, Canada. 28 November, 1923, Temple Emanu- El Archives.

insurance center of the Southwest, and was the leading market-place of Texas when David Lefkowitz arrived to begin his tenure as rabbi of Temple Emanu- El⁹.

Dallas, as a southern city, followed the southern practice of strict racial segregation. Public schools had been segregated as early as 1872, although they were not legally compelled to do so until 1896.¹⁰ By 1920, separation of the races was total all over the South, including Dallas. Not only were schools designated as targets of Jim Crow laws, but also trains, buses, and other public transportation; housing and workplaces, restaurants, theaters, hospitals, playgrounds, public parks, swimming pools, and organized sports. City parks in Dallas became segregated in 1915, when the Park Board voted to create two specific facilities for Negroes, Oak Cliff Negro Park at Sabine and Cliff Streets and Hall Street Park, which later was renamed Griggs Park. Streetcars were segregated along with water fountains and restrooms. In addition, many restaurants either refused to serve Negroes outright, or sold them “to go” meals only, and black customers were not allowed to try on merchandise at clothing stores.¹¹ The Jewish community evidently accepted, as a whole, the racial ideas of the day; in January, 1922, the Council of Jewish Women put on a minstrel show in the auditorium of Forest Avenue High School, spotlighting Sadie Lefkowitz who sang a solo, and in May, 1925, the temple

⁹ *The Jewish Monitor*, 26 November, 1920.

¹⁰ *City Directory*, 1872.

¹¹ C. Vann Woodward. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, Third Revised Edition. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 31; Darwin Payne, *Big D: Triumphs and Troubles of an American Supercity in the 20th Century*. (Dallas: Three Forks Press, 1994), 176- 177.

sisterhood performed another, as a fund raiser.¹²

Lefkowitz arrived in Dallas on June 1, 1920. His family spent the summer in Michigan and joined him later in the fall. He stayed at the Adolphus Hotel during the summer, commuting back and forth from his summer vacation in Michigan to Dallas so he could officiate at the the marriage ceremony for several couples during this period.¹³ In September, Sadie, their three sons, Lewis, eighteen, Harry, sixteen, David Junior, nine, and their daughter Helen, fourteen , all arrived in Dallas. The family rented a home at 1833 Forest Avenue (now Martin Luther King Boulevard) until the house at 2415 South Boulevard that the congregation built for them was finished. After the family moved into their temporary home on Forest Avenue, they held a reception to meet the congregation. It was a fateful Sunday afternoon for Lewis Lefkowitz, the oldest son, and Blanche Mittenthal, the daughter of one of the temple's more prominent members (and its future president). These two young people met then and began a courtship that culminated with their marriage in December, 1926, after they had finished their respective educations.¹⁴ The house was one block from the temple, which was on the

¹²*The Dallas Morning News*, 1 January 1922. *Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 1 May, 1925. Archives, Temple Emanu-El. Minstrel shows were popular forms of entertainment during the Twenties for white people, including Jews. In 1927, Al Jolson starred in the first movie musical, *The Jazz Singer*, playing a Jewish singer who preformed in blackface. *Texas Jewish Post*, 22 May 1952. The brotherhood of Shearith Israel, the Conservative synagogue in Dallas, also entertained with a blackface minstrel show during the 1920's.

¹³ *The Jewish Monitor*, 4 June, 1920; Blanche Lefkowitz, interview by Gerry Cristol, 29 March, 1974, tape recording, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

¹⁴ Blanche Mittenthal Lefkowitz, interview by Gerry Cristol, 29 March, 1974, tape recording, Temple Emanu-El Archives; *The Jewish Record*, 3 December, 1926. Lewis served as president of Temple Emanu-El from 1953 until 1955, the same year his father died and ground breaking began for the new building at Hillcrest and the Northwest

corner of South Boulevard and Harwood Street, so the family was able to walk to services.¹⁵

David Lefkowitz had been an important citizen in Dayton, and the town fathers tried hard to persuade him to stay; however, he was determined to go to Texas. One month after his arrival, the congregation of Temple Emanu-El presented Lefkowitz, who was known simply as “The Doctor,” with a new car as well.¹⁶ Within a year of his arrival, the congregation’s Board of Directors voted to take out a \$10,000 life insurance policy in his name, which, upon his demise, would be payable to the congregation.¹⁷

Lefkowitz’ last public event in Dayton was a community dinner party the city hosted in honor of him and his family; hundreds of citizens from all walks of life attended, including Christian and Jewish clergy. *The Jewish Monitor* quoted from the *Dayton*

Highway. Lewis and Blanche had two children, Emily and Lewis, Junior. When their son graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in 1947, his grandfather, Rabbi Lefkowitz, delivered the principal address. Emily graduated from The Hockaday School, a private girls school, along with her first cousin, Cecile Florence, Helen’s daughter.

¹⁵ Although Orthodox Jews are required by religious law not to ride on the Sabbath, Reform Jews may ride if they choose to do so. The fact that the Temple was within walking distance to the Lefkowitz home was merely a convenience for them. Lefkowitz, a Reform Jew, rode and drove on the Sabbath, as he would any other day of the week. During his active years in the rabbinate, he led or attended Sabbath services every Friday night and Saturday morning that he was in the city. In this manner he observed the Sabbath according to the tenets of Reform Judaism.

¹⁶ *The Jewish Monitor*, 1 October, 1920.

¹⁷ Minutes, Board of Directors Meeting, Temple Emanu-El, 3 April, 1921; Louis Tobian, to Mr. T. I. Levitt, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 30 July, 1952, Temple Emanu-El Archives. This policy was intended for Lefkowitz’s retirement; however, it was canceled during the Depression. As a result, the congregation had no funds available when he retired in 1949. To make amends, the congregation paid him \$12,000 annually as a salary after he became Rabbi Emeritus. This arrangement continued until he died in June, 1955.

Journal the following editorial: “The *Journal* feels very certain that it expresses the sentiment of the entire city when it wishes the rabbi and his excellent family the greatest measure of success in their new field, and we wish him particularly to remember Dayton’s latchstring always hangs out for him”¹⁸

Lefkowitz grew up in an orphanage, without the support of a family and a home. Perhaps, as a result, he became the consummate family man.¹⁹ Lewis, the oldest child, spent a year at Rice University in Houston, before transferring to the University of Texas. He later earned his law degree at Columbia University in New York City. Harry, the second oldest, graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Texas, and received a medical degree from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. He moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where he began a practice in pediatrics. Helen, the third child and only girl, graduated from Southern Methodist University prior to her marriage, and David Jr, the youngest, attended the University of Texas for two years. He then transferred to the University of Cincinnati while concurrently studying for the rabbinate at Hebrew Union

¹⁸ *The Jewish Monitor*, 10 September 1920, citing an undated editorial in the *Dayton Journal*. Cristol, 91. It is uncertain why Lefkowitz was called “Doctor.” He never earned a Ph.D., although Hebrew Union College later awarded him an honorary one. He probably was called by that title either as a mark of respect, or because of local tradition. William Greenberg, who preceded him, had earned a Ph.D., and had been called Dr. Greenberg.

¹⁹ Cecile Florence Cook, interview by Jane Guzman, 7 December, 1998, tape recording. Cecile’s parents, Helen Lefkowitz Florence, and Fred Florence, adopted her when she was an infant. Because of this fact, her grandfather, David Lefkowitz, said the two of them had a special bond, since he had grown up in an orphanage. David Lefkowitz to Rabbi David Rosenbaum, Austin, Texas, 14 September, 1921, Temple Emanu-El Archives. Lefkowitz asks the rabbi in Austin to “keep a fatherly eye on Lewis and Harry.” The two older boys were students at the University of Texas, and their father worried about them.

College. Upon graduation and ordination, he served as his father's assistant. This was the first time in the American rabbinate that a son served as his father's assistant.²⁰ David Junior left Dallas in 1940 to become the associate rabbi at Temple B'nai Zion, (Sons of Zion), in Shreveport, Louisiana. He remained there throughout his life, leaving only for his tour of duty during World War II, where he served as a chaplain in the army.

Lewis, his wife, Helen, and her husband, banker Fred Florence, and David Jr. and his wife, Leona, all spent time in their parents' home at some time during their marriages. Leona lived with her in-laws during World War II while her husband was serving in the military. Lefkowitz summed up his ideas about home in a sermon he delivered while he was still in Dayton. Home, he declared, was "the finest boast of the Jew." It was a place of caring for children, a place of religion, and a place for teaching. According to him, it should be filled with virtues of purity, love, and reverence. He understood a mother's duty was to imitate Sarah, who "found joy in her tent." A father should be a teacher, and both parents should be models of religion in the home.²¹ He believed that the family was the center of all human institutions, and that it must be a place for religious instruction for children. Lefkowitz was convinced that such instruction could not come too soon; for example, he declared that during the *Seder*, or Passover dinner, a ritual observed in the home, that children should be recognized as members of the circle.²²

²⁰*The American Israelite*, 25 March, 1937.

²¹David Lefkowitz, "Israel, the Home," 27 December, 1912. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²² David Lefkowitz, "Lessons in the *Sedar Haggadah*," 9 March, 1912, Temple Emanu El; David Lefkowitz, to Reverend Raymond Vernimont, 30 October, 1930, Denton, Texas, Archives, Temple Emanu-El. Lefkowitz agreed with Reverend Vernimont that

Although the Lefkowitz home was not a kosher one, neither ham nor pork was ever on the table. Bread was forbidden during Passover, according to traditional custom, although special dishes were not used during this time, as they would have been in an Orthodox household. As his son, David, recalled, Lefkowitz fasted on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, in the same manner as his Orthodox co-religionists, and the effort, along with the ordeal of a day-long religious service exhausted him, although according to his son, his face glowed from the sanctity of the day. After the service ended, Sadie greeted him at the door with a dish of herring and a glass of schnapps to break his fast.²³

Sadie was in charge of the organization of the Lefkowitz home. She was fondly remembered by her daughter in-law, Leona, and her granddaughter, Cecile Florence Cook, as a great lady, with a beautiful face and voice, as well being the most organized person they have ever known.²⁴ Cash was always tight in the Lefkowitz household, since David would give Sadie half his paycheck to run the household and distribute the rest to various charities during the year. After his death, his family found his desk drawer was crammed with I.O.U.s.²⁵ To save money, Sadie made all her own clothes and all of

“home influence is certainly the most important in developing the character of the child.” Father Raymond Vernimont was the priest at the only Catholic church in Denton at the time, The Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.

²³David Lefkowitz Jr. interview, 27 January, 1980.

²⁴Leona Atlas Lefkowitz, interview by Jane Guzman, 19 November 1998; Cecile Cook, interview by Jane Guzman, 7 December, 1998.

²⁵ Leona Lefkowitz interview; David Lefkowitz, to Rabbi David Rosenbaum, Austin, Texas, 16 March, 1922. Temple Emanu-El Archives. Lefkowitz wrote his friend that he called his sons in Austin long- distance, but it was “worth this extravagance by its being Harry’s birthday.”

Helen's until the latter's marriage.²⁶ Sadie and David Lefkowitz were a team, and presented themselves as such to their new community. Both of them had a well-developed sense of humor. Leona Lefkowitz remembered a puppy they once had. They were undecided about what to call it, and their maid suggested that they name the new pet after their recent vacation. Thus, the dog, Yellowstone National Park, became part of the Lefkowitz family²⁷.

Upon taking the Dallas pulpit, Lefkowitz started to write and edit a monthly temple bulletin; he also organized a Bible class, and with Sadie, convinced the ladies of the Guild of Temple Emanu-El to join the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, the large, women's organization affiliated with the Reform movement among Jewish temples., and urged the men to join the Brotherhood of the Temple as well.²⁸

The Dallas Rotary Club invited David Lefkowitz to join in December, 1926. He was the first member of the Jewish clergy invited to join this group. Although Lefkowitz had been a member of the Rotary Club in Dayton, each chapter was independent, and ,membership did not automatically transfer. One had to be invited to join, and only one representative of each profession or major business could be a member at any given time. When Lefkowitz was invited to join the Rotary, he joined as the member of the Jewish

²⁶ Blanche Lefkowitz, interview by Gerry Cristol, 29 March, 1974, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²⁷ Leona Lefkowitz interview.

²⁸ *The Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 14 October, 1920; 1 October, 1921. Minnie Hexter, "History of the Sisterhood of Temple Emanu-El, (n.p. n.d.), Temple Emanu-El Archives. Lefkowitz also began a Young Peoples' Temple Society, for the unmarried members of the congregation over eighteen years of age.

clergy. With the recognition this implied, Lefkowitz came to believe that he represented the entire Jewish community of Dallas, Orthodox as well as Reform. As his ministry would show, others in the community began to believe this as well, especially the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. The couple ate lunch together everyday at their home except on the days when David attended a Rotary club luncheon.²⁹ Their meal together was usually toast, eggs, and coffee. Then, they took a nap, and rose later in the afternoon to continue their respective duties. They went out four or five nights a week, usually in formal clothes.³⁰ Friday night was *Shabbos*, or Sabbath, and the entire family gathered around the Lefkowitz's round dining room table for a roast beef dinner and Sadie's specialty, "goo" cake, before services. They would then walk the block to the temple. The entire family always sat in the same rows. After the service, there would be an *Oneg Shabbat*, or Sabbath reception at the temple. Sometimes the Lefkowitz family would invite special guests back to the parsonage, where there might be entertainment, such as an impromptu concert.³¹ The Friday night dinners and following Sabbath services were of paramount importance in the Lefkowitz family, and children and grandchildren were

²⁹ David Lefkowitz, to Rabbi Samuel S. Meyersberg, Dayton, Ohio, 8 December, 1920; *Dallas Morning News*, 4 February, 1923. Lefkowitz told his replacement in Dayton, who assumed his membership in the Rotary Club that no Jewish clerical membership existed for him in Dallas, and that "one Protestant preacher represents the entire ministry of the city." David Lefkowitz, to Edward Schwiller, secretary of the Dallas Rotary Club, 20 December, 1926. He was proud of his membership in this body, and always signed his letters to his fellow Rotarians, "Rotarily yours." Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³⁰ Blanche Lefkowitz interview.

³¹ Emily Lefkowitz Hexter, interview by Gerry Cristol, 2 June, 1994, Temple Emanu-El Archives; David Lefkowitz Jr, Interview .

expected to attend and forgo school or social events that conflicted with this ritual.³²

Immediately upon his move to Dallas, Lefkowitz was besieged by invitations to become active in civic and social affairs.³³ As rabbi, he became an honorary member of Pi Tau Pi, an exclusive fraternity for Jewish men, and also, as was the custom, became an honorary member of the Columbian Club; thus, he and his family joined the highest echelon of local Jewish society.³⁴

During the Twenties, Jewish society was a real presence in Dallas. The wealthier, more established Jews led lives parallel to the gentile society leaders. The Columbian Club presented debutantes to the local gentry. Both Blanche Mittenthal and Helen Lefkowitz “came out” there.³⁵ When Lefkowitz joined the Critics’ Club, he met the

³² Cecile Cook interview.

³³ David Lefkowitz, to Harry Prince, Dallas, 23 November, 1920. Lefkowitz was invited to by on the program for Armistice Day. David Lefkowitz, to Miss Katherine Gray, Dallas, 11 November, 1920. Lefkowitz, already a member of the Texas Conference of Social Welfare wrote a note regretting the fact that he would be unable to attend a committee meeting. Mrs. Helen Palmerston, to Rabbi David Lefkowitz, 28 January, 1921, asking David Lefkowitz to serve on the Advisory Board of the Girl Scout Council. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³⁴ Max Tonkon, interview by Jane Guzman, 10 January, 1999; *The Pitaupian*, February, March, 1967, *Pi Tau Pi Handbook*, n.d. Pi Tau Pi was a fraternity founded by four German-Jewish men in St. Louis, Missouri 9 November, 1909. It lasted until spring of 1967. At its peak, it had 24 chapters and several chapters for young men. The Reform rabbi in a town where there was a chapter became an honorary member. Although Tonkon, a member of this elite group, stressed the fact that the function of the group was social, at its yearly conferences, or conclaves, the Monroe trophy was awarded to the chapter with the best philanthropic program, and the Tonkon family award (started by his father, I. Edward Tonkon), was given to individual members to encourage the study of Judaism.

³⁵ *The Jewish Record*, 28 November, 1924; 27 November 1925.

business and professional leaders of the city.

Among the Jewish leaders prominent in Dallas society was Fred Florence who later became Lefkowitz's son-in-law. He was born in November 5, 1891, in New York City. In 1892, the family moved to New Birmingham, Texas, and finally settled in Rusk, Texas, two years later. On January 1, 1910, his older brother, Meyer, petitioned the district court of Cherokee County to change his last name, and the surnames of the entire family from Fromowitz to Florence.³⁶

In 1915, after his high school graduation, Fred Florence went to work for a local bank. Following service in World War I, he returned to banking, where he earned an excellent reputation as a banker. On May 6, 1920, at the Board of Directors' meeting of the Guaranty Bank and Trust Company of Dallas, Texas, Florence was elected First Vice-President. As a result, he moved to Dallas.³⁷

Soon after he moved to Dallas, Florence joined the temple, and took an active role in it.³⁸ By 1923, he had been elected to the Board of Directors of the temple, and naturally

³⁶H. Harold Wineburgh, *The Texas Banker; The Life and Times of Fred Farrel Florence*. (Dallas: H. Harold Wineburgh, 1981), 10-15. Although Florence had no middle name, he did have an initial, and often said he took his middle name from a baseball player. According to his biographer, Florence never said which one it was. The National Baseball Library lists seven players who were active in the major leagues from 1882 until 1925 whose last names were Farrell, but none were either named Fred or had first names starting with the letter "F." His father never took the name Florence, but after his death in 1926, his mother used it and was known as Mrs. Florence.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 32-35. At a special meeting of the board on April 3, 1922, the name of the bank became the Republic National Bank. This bank remained, with this name, throughout Lefkowitz's and Florence's lifetimes.

³⁸ *Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 1 September, 1920. On this date, Fred F. Florence was one of the seventy- six new members who were welcomed into the congregation. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

enough, was appointed to the finance committee.³⁹ By 1927, he was the treasurer of the congregation, and had become engaged to Helen, the rabbi's daughter. Lefkowitz, always short of funds, wrote a friend that "it may mean there won't be any slip-ups in my getting my monthly check." The couple were married by Lefkowitz and Sadie's brother-in-law, Rabbi Solomon Kory of Vicksburg, Mississippi, in a small home ceremony on February 21, 1928.⁴⁰ On January 8, 1929, Florence became president of the Republic Bank. Since he was only thirty-seven at the time, he became the youngest bank president of a Dallas bank, which made him president of the second largest bank in the eleventh federal reserve district.⁴¹ Florence became active in a number of religious and civic groups. In addition to serving as the temple's treasurer for many years, he served at various times as Director of the Dallas Community Chest, a trustee of St. Marks' School of Texas, director of the Dallas Grand Opera Association. He was also Director for the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, Director for the Pilot Institute for the Deaf, and was a member of the executive committee of Southern Methodist University. In 1944, he was the sixteenth recipient of the city's highest honor, the Linz Award.

According to the guiding rules for the selection of the honoree, the citizen to receive it

is to be that citizen of Dallas County, man or woman, whose deed or deeds during the current year has conferred, in the opinion of the committee, the greatest benefit upon the community of Dallas. The deed or deeds upon which the decision

³⁹ Minutes, Board of Directors, Temple Emanu-El, 18 May, 1923, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁴⁰David Lefkowitz, to Dr. Julian Morganstern, 27 December, Temple Emanu-El Archives. Morganstern was the president of Hebrew Union College. *The Dallas Morning News*, 22 February, 1928; Wineburgh, 39.

⁴¹Wineburgh, 102; *The Jewish Herald*, 17 January, 1929.

will be based may be humanitarian or civic. The awardee must have received no salary or monetary compensation in the performance of such deeds.⁴²

In addition, Florence served as president of the Texas Bankers Association in 1935, was the president of the Texas Centennial Exposition in 1936, and he served as president of the American Bankers Association from 1955-1956.⁴³ According to his biographer,

Dr. Lefkowitz was the first to inspire Fred's real interest in philanthropy. Dr. Lefkowitz was the type of religious leader that we compare with the great prophets and teachers of the past.. There is no doubt that the rabbi encouraged and even led his son-in-law into many charitable and educational fields that Fred might not otherwise have entered. He gave Fred a sense of mission and an optimistic outlook on life, and he taught him to look for the good in people.⁴⁴

Lefkowitz inspired others in his family to participate in civic activities as well. As a child living in the HOA, he had learned one of the basic tenets of Reform Judaism: to maintain religious allegiance while taking one's place in American society.⁴⁵ As a result, he taught his children to become active in the community. His son Lewis, who served as president of Temple Emanu-El, was also secretary of the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods, and was a past president of both the Child Guidance Center and the Dallas Mental Health Society. He also was a member of the Board of Directors of the Dallas Chamber Music Society and the Dallas Public Library. His wife, Blanche, organized the Dallas Taping of the Blind, and served as its executive director until 1981. In 1990 this organization merged with several other groups to become the North Texas

⁴² Wineburgh, 187-188.

⁴³ Ibid., 176-177.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 202-203.

⁴⁵ Henry Feingold. *The Jewish People in America*, vol.3, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880-1920* by Gerald Sorin, 8.

Taping and Radio for the Blind in 1990. Helen Lefkowitz Florence Wineburgh, (she remarried after Florence's death in 1961), served on the Board of Governors of Southern Methodist University, the Southwest Legal Foundation, and was chairman of the Board of Directors for the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Society of Dallas.⁴⁶

By 1920 the Ku Klux Klan was a presence in Dallas; one of the founders of its revival in 1915 was a Dallas dentist, Dr. Hiram Evans. In the beginning of its rise to power in Texas after the Great War, some Jews regarded it as a joke. For example, Beatrice Wertheimer and Herbert Mallinson, were guests of honor at a dinner dance at the Columbian Club, prior to their nuptials. The male members of the wedding party hosted the party. The night's theme was the Ku Klux Klan. All the guests arrived wearing Klan costumes.⁴⁷ Since Jews were not among the primary targets of the Klan in Dallas, they did not consider the Klan as a threat to them.⁴⁸ In fact, the Klan went to some lengths to explain that they had no particular quarrel with Jews. In a front page editorial of the Klan newspaper, Evans, the Grand Wizard, explained that "while the Klan is exclusively for native born, white Christian Americans, the organization guarantees the

⁴⁶ *The Dallas Times Herald*, 2 May, 1966; *The Dallas Morning News*; 3 January 1994, Wineburgh, 43.

⁴⁷ *Dallas Morning News*, 5 June 1920. The paper said "the green lanterns hung cast a weird light over the grotesque costumes." This couple was one of the first was to be married by Lefkowitz. The wedding was the following Wednesday at the Columbian Club; there is no record of Lefkowitz attending the party.

⁴⁸ Mark N. Morris, "Saving Society Through Politics: the Ku Klux Klan in Dallas, Texas, in the 1920s." (Ph.D. diss., University of North Texas, 1997), 56; *The Texas (100 Per Cent) American*, 30 March, 1923, the Klan's weekly newspaper, stated that "History has proven that those nations who have favored the Jews have been blessed of God."

Jew's personal safety, as long as they are loyal Americans." He added that patriots such as Klansmen have "tendered the Jews hospitality in America that has not been accorded him elsewhere upon the face of the earth..⁴⁹ Catholics and Catholicism were the Klans's primary target in Texas, far more so than Jews or Negroes.⁵⁰ In fact, it is difficult to convey the extent of the anti-Catholicism that spewed forth from the pages of the local Klan newspaper, *The Texas (100 Per Cent) American*. The Klan believed that the Catholic Church a political machine whose mission was to destroy Protestant America.⁵¹

According to the Klan, the problem with Catholicism was that it was just too powerful hungry to obey the dictates of conscience and moral law. Since Catholic authorities were sworn to obey their superiors, no matter what the request, and because these same authorities could forgive sin, it was a lesser sin for a Catholic to break a moral law in the furtherance of an order from a superior than to commit the sin. This, the Klan believed, was the rule rather than the exception, which meant Catholic subversives (the two terms were almost synonymous to Klansmen), were extremely hard to ferret out because they hid behind a mask of religion. The only way, the Klan reasoned, to deal with such a secret, insidious threat to the country was to build a similar, yet opposing organization that would stand up for true American values, the Ku Klux Klan.⁵²

⁴⁹*The Texas (100 Per Cent) American*, 23 February, 1923.

⁵⁰Darwin Payne, *Big D: Triumphs and Troubles of an American Supercity in the 20th Century*. (Dallas: Three Forks Press, 1994), 85.

⁵¹Morris, 254.

⁵²Morris, 261, *The Texas (100 Per Cent American)*, 23 June 1923. For a general discussion of the Ku Klux Klan in the South, see Charles Alexander, *The Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965. For more specific

A rumor spread that the *Dallas Morning News* was a Catholic newspaper, and the local anti-Catholic forces were so strong that a number of people either canceled or threatened to cancel their subscriptions to the paper; George Dealey, the editor, wrote a number of letters to such people, listing the religious breakdown of the entire staff of the paper.⁵³

Lefkowitz had quickly integrated himself into the general community, and was a Mason. Although the Masonic lodges were filled mainly with Protestants, Lefkowitz and Julius Schepps, a temple member and owner of Schepps Bakery, attended their meetings with some regularity. At the meetings, Lefkowitz and Schepps argued that Klan involvement was a detriment to Masonic membership.⁵⁴ In his own efforts to combat the Klan, Schepps paid membership fees for some fifty of his employees so that they could infiltrate it and keep him informed as to its activities.⁵⁵ While Lefkowitz, Schepps, and Fred Florence were active in civic affairs, it was unusual for Jews to participate with

information, see Mark Morris, "Saving Society through Politics: The Ku Klux Klan in Dallas, Texas in the 1920s" PhD. Diss, University of North Texas, 1997.

⁵³ George Dealey papers, Dallas Historical Society. All the member of the newspaper's staff were Protestant. It is interesting to speculate would have happened if any Jews had been employed by the *Dallas Morning News*.

⁵⁴ Payne, 85.

⁵⁵ Marilyn Wood Hill, "A History of Jewish Involvement in the Dallas Community" (M. A. thesis, Southern Methodist University, 1967), 52- 53. Schepps became a community leader and won the Linz award in 1954 for his volunteer work in the community at large; his interests ranged from the Dallas Salesmanship boys' camps, the United Way, the Park Board, to the Jewish Welfare Federation. He was instrumental in establishing the Dallas Jewish Home for the Aged. The original name for The Jewish Community Center, built in 1958, was the Julius Schepps Community Center. Julius Schepps folder, Archives, , Dallas Public Library.

their wives in civic or social activities in the evening in the New South; two men, Jew and gentile, could know each other on a personal basis for years without their wives ever having met.⁵⁶

Despite the denials of Evans, however, a few anti-Semitic incidents took place; some Jewish citizens received threatening telephone calls in the middle of the night; a few Jewish men were warned not to date non-Jewish girls, and finally, Helman Rosenthal, a member of Temple Emanu-El who was the city's first professional head of the water department, lost his job when the Klan took control of the city's government.⁵⁷ In the beginning, Lefkowitz did not publically criticize the Invisible Empire. Although he was aware of the potential threat it posed, he was reluctant to speak out against the Klan because he believed that it could be more easily defeated by denying it publicity.⁵⁸

The situation came to a head when Philip Rothblum, a Jewish picture framer, was dragged from his home and attacked by Klansmen, early in March, 1922. Rothblum was blindfolded, taken to an unknown destination, and beaten with a heavy black snake whip. His tormentors threatened him with further harm if he did not leave Dallas at once;

⁵⁶Harry Golden. "Jew and Gentile in the New South: Segregation at Sundown." *Commentary*, Vol. 20, No.5, (November 1955), 403. Golden does not give a reason for the origin of this custom, but since evening dates are traditionally made by wives, and Protestant and Jewish women alike made friends among their ethnic groups, it was likely that Christian and Jewish ladies did not know each other well enough to make plans to socialize.

⁵⁷Hill, 52.

⁵⁸David Lefkowitz to Mrs. A. J. Kaufman, Buffalo, Texas, 2 February, 1922. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

he immediately closed down his business and left the city.⁵⁹ Rothblum pressed charges, and returned to Dallas for the trial, but the jury refused to indict the man he identified, Police Officer J. J. Crawford, as a member of the Ku Klux Klan.⁶⁰ Lefkowitz never spoke out on Rothblum's behalf; nor did the Jewish press. The Klan press identified Rothblum as a "Jew disowned by the better element of his own race, and despised by every lover of pure womanhood in the city of Dallas and the State of Texas." Interestingly enough, the local Jewish press did not mention the event⁶¹

It was not uncommon in the early half of the 1920s for elected officials to also be Klansmen. In the spring of 1923, Dallas voters elected Louis Blaylock mayor. He was the candidate the Klan supported, and he also headed the local Democratic party ticket. Blaylock had been the mayor pro tem, and he ran on a platform of civic improvements: improved traffic conditions, an abundant water supply, improvement of educational facilities, recognition of women's rights, more street paving, and Home Rule for Dallas.⁶²

After the votes were counted, Lefkowitz wrote an editorial for the Jewish newspaper deploring the situation. While he was unhappy about the elevation of such a candidate, he stated that he did not believe Blaylock won because he was supported by the Klan; in his view, "that would mean that the churches and schools taught hate instead of the

⁵⁹*The Dallas Morning News*, 8 March, 1922.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 15 March, 1922. Dallas County started keeping transcripts of trials only after 1930; thus, no transcript is available for this trial.

⁶¹The national Jewish press mentioned the Ku Klux Klan a number of times; 1 November, 1922, 15 November, 1922, 20 December, 1923, December 1922, 1 February 1924, and 29 May, 1924, for example.

⁶²*The Dallas Morning News*, 3 April 1923.

Brotherhood and the other lovable teachings of the gentle Nazarene.” Lefkowitz added,

We cannot read the issue this way. So many complicating terms were involved in the recent elections, such as the desire for harmony in municipal matters, so important a part did the personality and record of service of the nominee for mayor rather than his identification with the Klan group play in the final result, that it cannot be called a clear-cut decision of the voters of Dallas for the Klan.”⁶³

Lefkowitz, always the diplomat, tried to make the best of the situation and deflect attention away from a perceived threat to his flock.

The popularity of the Klan was reflected in the fact that October 24, 1923, was Ku Klux Klan Day at the State Fair of Texas. During the ceremonies marking the day, Hiram Evans, the Grand Wizard of the organization, addressing the crowd, explained the Klan’s ambivalent attitude toward Jews. He declared that “while Jews were law-abiding, family people who were mentally alert, their homes are not *American*, but Jewish homes, into which we cannot go, and from which they will never emerge for a real intermingling with Americans.” He added that “patriotism (for the Jew) as the Anglo-Saxon feels it is impossible.”⁶⁴

Lefkowitz answered this rebuke in his sermon the following Friday. It was printed in the Sunday edition of *the Dallas Morning News*. The rabbi denied the leader’s slurs about the patriotism of the Jew. “How,” he asked, “could the patriotism of the Jew be questioned, since they fought and died so bravely side by side with their fellow Americans in the recent Great War?”⁶⁵

⁶³*The Jewish Monitor*, 6 April 1923.

⁶⁴*The Dallas Morning News*, 25 October, 1923; *The Texas (100 Per Cent) American*, 26 October, 1923.

⁶⁵*The Dallas Morning News*, 26 October, 1923.

Another threat to the Jews in Texas was former Governor James E. Ferguson, “Farmer Jim,” who published a weekly newspaper, *The Ferguson Forum*. Citizens of Texas had elected Ferguson governor in 1914; in July, 1917, the Texas House of Representatives impeached him on twenty-one counts of misuse of funds; ten of these counts were upheld in a trial by the Texas Senate. As a result, he was dismissed from office with the proviso that he never hold office in the state of Texas again. While Ferguson was anti-Klan, he was also anti-Semitic, and used his newspaper as a mouthpiece for his hatred of Jews. *The Texas (100 Per Cent) American*, the weekly Klan newspaper, reprinted his diatribe, from *The Ferguson Forum*, “The Cloven Foot of the Dallas Jew,” in its issue of 23 March 1923. He charged that the “Big Jews” of Dallas and the Ku Klux Klan had joined forces. As he saw it, the Klan was out to win the big political offices, while the Jews were out to get the big businesses. He arrived at this conclusion because no Jew would advertise in his newspaper, and stated that “every Jew in Dallas with but few exceptions are [sic] supporting the Ku Klux Candidate, Mr. Blaylock.” While the large department stores, owned by Jews, such as Sanger Brothers and Neiman-Marcus, did not advertize in *The Ferguson Forum* they did not advertise in either *The Jewish Monitor* or *The Texas (100 Per Cent) American*, a fact either unnoticed or irrelevant to Ferguson.

By 1924, the Dallas Jewish community had firmly aligned itself against the Klan. That year’s state elections marked the end of any power the Invisible Empire would have in Texas. Internal strife erupted over the chosen Klan candidate for governor. As a result of a divided Klan, and the election of Miriam Ferguson, the wife of Farmer Jim, an

opponent of the Klan, to the office, political power for the Klan ebbed away.⁶⁶ Since the Ferguson forces were victorious, and Ferguson was a rabid anti-Semite, it might safely be said that the Jews of Dallas, led by Lefkowitz, had steered between the Scylla of the Klan and the Charybdis of Ferguson, and had been caught by the latter. The Doctor was now faced with the task of presenting Judaism as a non-threatening influence to the community at large. He would devote his career to this challenge. Lefkowitz brought new energy to the position of Temple Emanu-El's rabbi with his characteristic vigor. Early on he began editing a monthly newsletter. One of the earliest letters he wrote from his new post was to a colleague, Rabbi Ephraim Frisch of New York City, who later to become a controversial figure at the temple in San Antonio, Texas.⁶⁷ Frisch had started a bulletin for his congregation, and Lefkowitz asked him about the format, as he started writing one for Temple Emanu-El. In addition to his pastoral duties; he preached every Friday night, spoke to civic groups in the area, visited the sick, at home or in the hospital, and was the principal of the religious school. During a typical week, he delivered four addresses to such groups as the Sociology Club at SMU; the Ladies Auxiliary of Shearith Israel, the Council of Jewish women at Shreveport, Louisiana; and the Shreveport B'nai B'rith Lodge's celebration of its 50th anniversary. This pace continued throughout his ministry.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Morris, "Saving Society Through Politics," 226.

⁶⁷David Lefkowitz to Rabbi Ephraim Frisch, 14 October, 1920. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁶⁸*Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 29 January, 1921. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

Lefkowitz spent the entire decade of the 1920s establishing himself in Dallas in civic and religious circles. He had an open ear to all, and worked hard to make Reform Judaism acceptable to the Orthodox, who looked at the movement with some misgivings, while working equally hard to make a place for Jews in the community at large. A year after he assumed his new post, he wrote his opinion about Jews in history in response to a letter by a Dr. William M. Anderson, who had written a letter to *The Dallas Morning News* that claimed that if it were not for Jesus, that the Jews would have “taken their place in oblivion along with Egypt, Babylonia, and Greece.” The rabbi pointed out that not only was that not the case, but “The coming of Jesus did not improve the condition of the Jewish people, and in fact, they were treated far better by nations before the Christian era.”⁶⁹ Lefkowitz rarely missed as opportunity to educate others about Judaism. Once, the Critics’ Club met on the first night of Passover. In his letter of regret, Lefkowitz wrote that “the home service is the original Last Supper.”⁷⁰ By the end of the decade, his reputation had spread, and Jews all over the state knew he would help them with difficult situations peculiar to their religion. He even arranged for Jewish prisoners to receive special food during Passover.⁷¹

When the occasion called for him to share a meal with Jews who observed the dietary

⁶⁹David Lefkowitz Dr. William M. Anderson, 28 November, 1921, Dallas Texas. Temple Emanu- El Archives.

⁷⁰David Lefkowitz to General M.M. Crane, 25 March, 1926, Dallas, Texas. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁷¹David Lefkowitz to George Picknell, Camp #3, Penny Landing, Texas, 26 March, 1929, Temple Emanu-El Archives. Jews who observe dietary laws and eat canned or packaged food may only consume food prepared especially for Passover.

laws, he followed them too, and refrained from mixing dairy and meat products within the same meal, as they would.. He considered this simply good manners. In addition, following Reform custom, although he would not wear a *kipa* in the Temple Emanu-El, he would always put one on in a synagogue where tradition demanded it⁷²

Lefkowitz always thought of himself as the rabbi for all the Jews in the area, and to some degree, other Jews recognized his influence.⁷³ As an example of his willingness to cooperate with his fellow Jews, and perhaps as an acknowledgement of commitment, he was the principal speaker at the dedication ceremony of Congregation Agudas Achim, a new Orthodox synagogue in Dallas on Sunday, August 22, 1924.⁷⁴ That year his congregation, rewarded him for his efforts by giving him a pay raise which was retroactive to January 1, 1924. Henceforth, he would earn twelve thousand dollars a year.⁷⁵

By 1926, Lefkowitz had become a major presence in Dallas. In addition to his pastoral duties, he served concurrently as chairman of the United Charities, the Community Chest, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, the Camp Fire Girls, the Dallas

⁷²David Lefkowitz Jr. Interview with Ginger Jacobs, 27 January, 1980, Austin, Texas. Tape recording, Dallas Jewish Historical Society.

⁷³David Lefkowitz, to Mr. Louis Morris, Fort Worth, Texas, 2 March, 1922. Temple Emanu-El Archives. Lefkowitz wrote that he would use all his influence to secure a post at Shearith Israel for another rabbi. It is noteworthy that a Reform rabbi, as well as at least one other person, thought his word would carry weight with another branch of Judaism. Lefkowitz was not successful in this case.

⁷⁴*The Jewish Monitor*, 20 August, 1924.

⁷⁵Minutes, Board of Directors, Temple Emanu-El, 4 January, 1924. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

Astronomical Society, and the Jewish Federation for Social Service. He also held memberships in the Critics' Club, the Athletic Club, and the University Club. He belonged to the Masons, the Pythians, the Elks, and the B'nai B'rith, as well as the Rotary. Despite his schedule, he managed to increase the number of temple members from the 250 families who belonged in 1920 when he arrived in Dallas to 600. In appreciation for this services, and those of Sadie, who was then serving as president of the Temple Sisterhood, the congregation held an open house in their honor at the Columbian Club on Sunday, October 10, 1926. This party also celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. Both Jews and gentiles were invited to attend the reception.⁷⁶

The Doctor, hoping for more cooperation among the Jews of Texas, organized the southwestern branch of the Jewish Chautauqua Society. The purpose of this organization was to establish a course of study for religious school teachers. The group elected him its first president.⁷⁷ By 1925, his national reputation was becoming apparent; reflecting the fact that at the biennial convention of the Union of American Hebrew congregations, (UAHC), he was invited to give one of the principal speeches.⁷⁸

On October, 1925, Lefkowitz took to the airwaves on station WFAA to broadcast the Yom Kippur services from the temple. Within a year, not only were the High Holy Day services broadcast, but also Friday night services of each month. Temple contributions

⁷⁶*The Jewish Monitor*, 15 October, 1926.

⁷⁷*The Jewish Record*, 5 December, 1924. *The American Israelite*, 11 December, 1924.

⁷⁸*Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 1 January, 1925. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

completely financed the programs .⁷⁹ On the Saturday morning of February 11, 1928, KRLD broadcast a special program under the auspices of the Texas Federation of Temple Sisterhoods. Entitled “The Peace Program,” it was the first of a series of important moments in Jewish history . It was produced with the hope that all Jewish children within radio range would listen , especially the Jewish children, along with their parents, scattered in small communities. The program included “Abraham and Lot.” a radio play, a story about the birth of Monotheism, from Jewish legends, a vocal selection by the Temple Choir, and an address by Dr. David Lefkowitz, “The First Peace Conference.” The program concluded with songs by two of the children of the congregation and a prayer by the rabbi. Later in the decade, KRLD ran more Saturday morning programs along similar lines ; they included original radio plays, as well as scripture reading, and songs .⁸⁰

Lefkowitz’s stature was growing, and his devotion to community causes was recognized on February, 1926, when the Dallas Chapter of the American Red Cross elected him to its executive board of directors; within a year, he became the chairman of

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 4 October, 1925, 1 October, 1926. Temple Emanu-El Archives. *The American Israelite*, 28 February, 1930. By early 1930, Reform rabbis presented weekly programs in New York , Terre Haute, Harrisburg, Pa., Boston, Columbus, Ohio, Cleveland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Topeka, Providence, and Roanoke, Va. Some programs were aired on Friday, others on Sunday, Tuesday or Wednesday. Subject matter varied from sermons to religious history, literature, and services. Lefkowitz’s programs typically consisted of a lecture, followed by a question and answer session.

⁸⁰*The Jewish Record*, 8 February, 1929, 5 March, 1929, 19 April, 1929. *The American Israelite*, 9 February, 1929.

the organization.⁸¹ In April, 1927, he became a 33rd degree Mason.⁸² Sadie, not to be outdone, became the president of the sisterhood of Temple Emanu-El that year and was elected to the National Board of the Federation of Temple Sisterhoods.⁸³ Lefkowitz received national recognition in 1927 as well, when the Board of Directors of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, (CCAR), elected him vice-president. In 1929, he became the president of that body. In 1930, the American members of the governing body of the World Union for Progressive Judaism elected Lefkowitz its chairman.⁸⁴ One month later, Southern Methodist University awarded David Lefkowitz an honorary Doctor of Law degree. This was the first time a Jew had ever received such an honor from that institution.⁸⁵ In fact, it was the first time in American history that a sectarian college had conferred an honorary degree upon a rabbi.⁸⁶ A special editorial of *The Dallas Morning News* declared,

⁸¹*Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 7, February, 1926; 5 January, 1927; David Lefkowitz to O.D. Brundage, 12 May, 1927, Temple Emanu-El Archives. Lefkowitz wrote that “during the past two weeks, I have spent more time at the Red Cross than in my study or home.”

⁸²David Lefkowitz, to Dr. S. M. Freedman, Dallas Texas, 27 October, 1927. Temple Emanu- El Archives.

⁸³*Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, February, 1927. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 1 May, 1930.

⁸⁵A. F. Henning, “*The Story of Southern Methodist University, 1910- 1930.*” Vol. I. (Dallas: n.p., 1930), 139. Program, Southern Methodist University Commencement Exercises and Conferring of Degrees, 3 June, 1930. Archives, De Golyer Library, Southern Methodist University. SMU had awarded eighteen honorary degrees before 1930, including thirteen Doctors of Law, but Lefkowitz was the first Jew to receive one. .

⁸⁶*The Jewish Record*, 6 June, 1930.

Rabbi Lefkowitz has been a man of singular kindliness and tolerance in his contacts with the Gentile world, and Doctor Lefkowitz is a man of profound scholarliness in anybody's world. The school which has bestowed on him the doctorate of laws will never need to be ashamed of the learning which it has thus signalized by the award. In addition to his personal qualifications of heart and mind the Rabbi Doctor has been a citizen interested and helpful in all matters for the spiritual and intellectual advancement of Dallas. His counsel had been useful and his readiness unflinching in the service of better things. Honorary degrees to such men vindicate themselves."⁸⁷

The Dallas Rotary Club printed a special tribute to Lefkowitz's honorary degree in its "Hall of Fame" column in the June 11 issue of its newsletter, *Dallas Rotograms*. It declared:

I doubt if any action by any institution could bring honor to a man who is as beloved as this man....It is because of his great heart that we love him because of his gentleness, his sincerity, his love of his fellowman-these are the things that make this David, as was the David of old, a great man. We honored David Lefkowitz before he received his degree, because we believed he was not only preaching but living "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man."⁸⁸

In April of 1927, Abraham Schechter of Houston, an Orthodox rabbi, formed the Kallah of Texas Rabbis. The purpose of this organization was to bring all of the Texas rabbis, Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox, together in a group to hold discussions, give papers, and share the work of providing Jews who lived away from established Jewish communities with their services. While the president, Abraham Schechter of Houston, was an Orthodox rabbi, the vice-president was Lefkowitz. In 1929, the Kallah elected him as its president.⁸⁹ When the Southwest Jewish Chautauqua Society met in

⁸⁷*The Dallas Morning News*, 5 June, 1930.

⁸⁸*Dallas Rotograms*, 11 June, 1930.

⁸⁹*The Jewish Record*, 8 April, 1927; *Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 1 May 1929, Temple Emanu-El Archives; Ruth Weingarten and Cathy Schechter, *Deep in the Heart: The Lives and Legends of Texas Jews*. (Austin: Eakin Press, 1990), 169. The Texas Kallah is the

San Antonio in December, 1928, Lefkowitz became its honorary president.⁹⁰

In 1930, during Lefkowitz's presidency, at the CCAR convention at Bar Harbor, Maine, one of the items on the agenda was the revision of the hymnal. The anti-Zionists wanted both the Zionist National hymn "Hatikvah" (later to become the national anthem of Israel), deleted, as well as the Kol Nidre included. The latter is an ancient hymn sung by secret Spanish Jews (Marranos) during the Spanish Inquisition and traditionally sung every *Yom Kippur* Eve. (Day of Atonement). The reason for omitting the former was the fact that the song supported a national Jewish homeland; a concept anti-Zionists did not accept. The anti-Zionists believed that it was the contention of the anti-Semites that Jewish oaths were of no value since the Kol Nidre prayer seemed to make null and void all oaths and undertakings. In fact, the prayer, written by Jews forced into conversion during the Spanish Inquisition, makes null and void only the oath they took declaring their belief in Christianity. The Berlin Kehillah (Jewish Community Council), had abolished the Kol Nidre prayer years before Lefkowitz' presidency, but the issue came to the forefront on his watch.⁹¹

Hardline reformers, such as David Philipson, followed the logic of the Berlin congregations, and interpreted these lyrics as weapons to be used against the Jews, since it could be extrapolated that Jews were untrustworthy and did not keep their word. Philipson also objected to the Kol Nidre because it was reminiscent of a period of Jewish

only organization of its kind in the United States.

⁹⁰*The Jewish Record*, 7 December, 1928.

⁹¹ *The Jewish Record*, 22 October, 1920.

persecution, the Spanish Inquisition.

It is possible this controversy was one of the reason's for Lefkowitz's election to the presidency of the CCAR. He had the reputation of being an agreeable man and loath to make waves, so that no one could object to his candidacy. Although personally an anti-Zionist, he would not engage in a long fight over this, or any other subject, and was silent on this matter. Philipson acknowledges this in his memoirs, as a reason why the anti-Zionists failed to carry the day on the hymnal issue. In describing Lefkowitz, he stated:

He is sweet and lovable, and these qualities go hand in hand with that vigor and power which are needed to meet critical situations. He is an Israelite without guile and therefore he is no match for the scheming politicians, of whom there are a number in the conference and who can be met and overcome only by using their own weapons.⁹²

While this is one reading of Lefkowitz, it is also possible that Philipson was wrong: that the boy who grew up alone in the orphanage developed into a leader without the appearance of guile, thus enabling him to steer the CCAR through a crisis, as he would later guide his congregation through the trials of next two decades.

⁹² David. Philipson, 425. *The Jewish Herald*, 3 July 1930. Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, pointed out that the prayer is a consequence and not the cause of the Jew's martyrdom. Wise also championed the inclusion of the Hatikvah, who declared that "it was the one song that Jews sing with devotion and enthusiasm because it voices their imperishable dreams and aspirations for a creative Hebrew life." *The Holy Scriptures*, Genesis 25:27; 28:10- 32:3; and 33: 29, describe Jacob as a "simple man meaning a man without guile. This is one of the essential qualities of a pious Jew. On the other hand, he was able to deal with Esau and with Lavan, who was definitely a scheming politician.

CHAPTER 3

THE TROUBLED THIRTIES

The Thirties began with a cloud over European Jewry. Lefkowitz began the decade, as he would end it, trying to aid his co-religionists throughout the world. Late in 1930, he wrote Rabbi Edgar Magnin in Los Angeles, trying to raise money for support of Dr. Leiken, a noted Jewish scholar from Russia. Lefkowitz hoped Leiken would be able to leave the Soviet Union, and find a professorship in a Jewish institution. He wrote Magnin to ask if Leiken might lecture at his temple to earn some money.¹

By 1933, American Jewry was aware of the terrible conditions facing the Jews of Germany. For example, *The Texas Jewish Herald* printed an article about Dachau, a concentration camp outside Munich.² During the decade, the Jewish press, both local and national, concerned itself with atrocities committed against German Jews by the German government. American Jews tried to inform the general public, but little attention was paid to them.³ Lefkowitz was perhaps more aware than most Americans about conditions

¹David Lefkowitz, to Rabbi Edgar Magnin, 18 December, 1930, 12 January, 1931. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²*The Texas Jewish Herald*, 10 August 1933.

³*The Dallas Morning News*, 16 April 1934. Temple Emanu-El hosted an event co-sponsored by all the city's rabbis and Jewish organizations. The speaker was Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman, who had just returned from a fact-finding tour of Nazi Germany. This meeting resulted in a drive to raise money to aid German Jews with the idea of their resettlement in Palestine. \$12,000, half the Dallas quota was raised the night of Isserman's speech.

there, since his son Harry had gone to Germany for medical training in pediatrics.⁴

Evidently Harry's letters home were not too alarming, for Lefkowitz wrote to a colleague that "all Jewry is going to have a difficult time for the next few years in Germany just as we did at the time of the clan [sic]. There is nothing to do in the circumstances for the conference (CCAR), or any other American group, for that matter."⁵

The immigration laws passed in the 1920s, which, at the time, did not seem to be specifically aimed at Jews, would prove crucial in the decade that followed. This law, signed by President Coolidge on May 26, 1924, had a drastic effect upon Jewish immigration. The combined quota for Poland, Russia, Rumania, and the Baltic countries, which before World War I furnished about 1,000,000 Jewish immigrants annually, was fixed at 9,443. The quota from Germany declined from 51,000 to 23,000.⁶ In the wake

⁴David Lefkowitz, to Mrs. Jesse Hirsch Frank, Nashville, Tennessee, 24 January, 1933; letter to Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Braham, Cincinnati, Ohio, 19 September, 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives. As a result of his high grades in medical school, Harry earned a fellowship from Babies' and Children's Hospital in Cleveland which enabled him to spend six months in European clinics to continue his studies in pediatrics. He, his wife, and infant son left the United States on 1 March, 1933. They went to Jena in Germany, Vienna, and finally to Berlin, where he was a delegate to an international medical convention. On 22 September, they returned to America, returning in New York from "The Deutchland," as Lefkowitz called it. Upon his return, Harry became an assistant physician at Babies and Children's Hospital and lectured in the Department of Medicine at Western Reserve University, in addition to joining a prominent pediatric group of doctors in private practice in Cleveland.

⁵David Lefkowitz, to Dr. Morris Newfield, Birmingham, Alabama, 27 March 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives. David Lefkowitz, letter to May Baer Solomon. New York City, 3 April, 1933. Harry had written that he experienced some difficulty in getting his money changed, and "saw some political excitement, but nothing to worry about." Lefkowitz does not elaborate; perhaps, Harry, aware of censors, chose not to go into further detail.

⁶ Henry Feingold, ed. *The Jewish People in America*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), vol.4, *A Time for Searching: Entering the Mainstream* by Henry

of the Great Depression, other countries were as reluctant as America to admit refugees to their shores because of the unemployment situation; jobs were still too scarce in any country that could have been a potential haven for any such country to consider taking in more people than the economy might support. Arab riots in Palestine in 1936 were a major reason for the British government to issue the White Paper of 1939 that severely restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine, as well as the sale of land there to Jews. As war loomed on the horizon, no nation welcomed Jewish refugees.⁷

As early as 1933, the CCAR was aware of the difficulties the Jews in Germany were experiencing, and began to solicit funds to help them.⁸ At the organization's forty-fifth annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, in May, 1937, the CCAR recognized the fact that war threatened Europe. Consequently, the group strongly endorsed the Inter-American Conference Maintenance of Peace, which had met in Buenos Aires in December, 1936, as well as other peace movements in general.⁹ Lefkowitz, following the directives of his national organization, as probably of his own heart as well, since he always sought a middle ground so as to avoid conflict whenever possible, became active in the local peace movement. He was elected vice-president of the Dallas chapter of the National Peace League in March, 1936, and later that year, he was appointed chairman of the committee

Feingold 29; *The American Jewish Yearbook* 40 (1938-39); 561; House Committee On Immigration and Naturalization, Restriction of Immigration, H. R. 5, 101, 561, 68th Cong., 1st Sess, 3 January, 1924, 388-389.

⁷Feingold, 227-228.

⁸Minutes, CCAR annual meeting, June, 1933, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 130.

⁹Minutes, CCAR annual meeting, May, 1937, Columbus, Ohio, 80.

to arrange the opening of the Emergency Peace Campaign of Dallas.¹⁰

Due to the pleading of Jewish leaders, by 1938, small administrative corrections eased the plight of a small number of German Jews, and they were allowed to apply for visas where ever they were. Visas were difficult to obtain, however, and as a result, only a small number of German Jews came to America.¹¹ Dr. Fred Brooksaler and his wife, Irmagard, were among the handful of Jews who were able to come to America in 1938. They were able to leave their home in Mannheim. Since Dr. Brooksaler had a cousin, Leo Brooksaler, living in Dallas, that was their destination. According to Mrs. Brooksaler, the couple was allowed to take their furniture and \$100.00 in German marks with them.¹² At that time, Texas was one of the states that permitted foreign physicians to sit for qualifying exams for a license to practice medicine. Within a week of their arrival, Leo Brooksaler took his cousins to services at Temple Emanu-El and introduced them to Rabbi Lefkowitz. He told them that they might join the Temple without having to pay any dues. When the High Holy Days came around in the fall, (*Rosh Hashonah*, the New Year and *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, the two holiest days in the Jewish calendar), Lefkowitz saw to it that the Brooksalers had complementary tickets so that they might attend services.¹³

¹⁰David Lefkowitz to Mrs Harold Abrams, 26 March, 1936; to Ray Newton, Executive Director, Emergency Peace Campaign, 8 December 1936. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

¹¹ Feingold, 22.

¹²Irmagard Brooksaler, interview by Gerry Cristol, 30 April, 1994. Tape recording, Temle Emanu-El Archives.

¹³ Brooksaler interview. Mrs Brooksaler added that Shearith Israel, the Conservative synagogue, did not extend the same courtesies to them that Temple Emanu-El did; no

Lefkowitz told Dr. Brooksaler, who had practiced pediatric medicine in Germany prior to his departure, to contact Dr. Leslie Moore, one of the more prominent pediatricians in Dallas, who incidentally, was not Jewish. As luck would have it, Dr. Moore had lost his intern who had been scheduled to work for him. Moore offered Brooksaler the job. He promptly took it, although it only paid \$25.00 a month. Mrs. Brooksaler got a job as a social worker at the Jewish Welfare Federation for \$75.00 a month.

The state board examination that year was held in November. Dr. Moore helped Dr. Brooksaler with his papers, since they had to be notarized in Germany, so that he might sit for the test. This was vital; in 1938 there were seventeen German Jewish doctors in Texas, and only seven had their papers ready on time. One of the seven was Brooksaler, thanks to Moore's assistance. The test was administered in Austin. Moore told Brooksaler, that if he had any trouble, to contact former governor, Dan Moody, who was a friend of Moore's. Those giving the test declared that only American citizens would be allowed to take it. While this was the rule at this time in some states, in 1938 it was not the case in Texas. Brooksaler contacted Moody, who told the administrators that if they did not allow the foreign doctors to sit for the test, the he would declare the entire exam

free tickets or memberships were offered to them, despite the fact, that due to their circumstances, that they were almost penniless. Since space was limited in the sanctuary at the Temple, tickets, which were proof of membership, had been required to attend these sacred services since 1922. By the early 1950s, before the new building was finished on the corner of Hillcrest and the Northwest Highway, the congregation observed the High Holy Day services at the State Fair Music Hall in Fair Park, because the sanctuary was much too small to accommodate the rapidly growing membership of the congregation.

void and illegal, since it was contrary to current Texas law. The threat worked; Brooksaler sat for the exam and passed it. Now, he would be able to practice medicine. Consequently, Moore hired him as his associate. As Brooksaler had no money, Moore did not require him to pay his share of the rent of the office; instead, Brooksaler took night calls and made house calls. ¹⁴

During the decade, Lefkowitz wrote a number of letters to Jews trapped in Nazi territory, including his nephew, Dr. Bela Lefkowitz, the son of his elder brother Moritz, who had remained in Europe. Bela, a dentist, was frantic to leave the terror of the Nazis and come with his family to America. Despite a number of letters back and forth across the Atlantic ocean, including several to Congressman Hatton Sumners and Senators Tom Connally and Morris Sheppard, Lefkowitz was not able to personally rescue any Jews trapped behind Nazi borders. In fact, his last letter to Bela is an apology, stating that despite his sponsorship, he was unable to bring Bela and his family to the United States, since by 1939 it was “almost impossible in the U.S. for foreign doctors to take exams before they can become citizens.”¹⁵

By the Thirties, Lefkowitz had become the spokesperson for Dallas Jewry. This was the norm for the Reform rabbi in the community, who often was one of the most educated

¹⁴Brooksaler interview..

¹⁵David Lefkowitz to Congressman Hatton Sumners, 10 May, 1934; 10 September, 1936; 17 January, 1938; 24 February 1938; 4 July, 1938; 15 September, 1938; to Senator Morris Sheppard, 10 September, 1936; Senator Tom Connally, 12 March, 1937; 12 March 1939; 25 April, 1939; 30 October, 1939; Dr. Bela Lefkowitz, Budapest, Hungary, 9 March, 1939; 5 May, 1939. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

clergymen in the city.¹⁶ He took it upon himself to speak out for the rights of Jewish citizens. For example, he wrote a letter to Norman Crozier, the superintendent of the Dallas public schools, informing him of the Jewish holidays that fell during the school year, to “enable the Jewish pupils of our schools to observe their holidays without losing their credits in quizzes, examinations, etc., that may be placed on these dates.”¹⁷ Lefkowitz later wrote Crozier on another subject. A qualified Jewish woman had been passed over for a job in the public schools for others “less well prepared.” Lefkowitz added in his letter, “I have long felt that there must be something wrong in the situation that finds Jewish school teachers so little represented in the Dallas school system...a story of this kind gets noised [sic] about very soon, and I should prefer to have the matter cleared up in justice to all before unpleasant recriminations are made.”¹⁸

Lefkowitz was a member of the Citizen’s Charter Association. This group was the unofficial political arm of the Dallas Citizens Council (DCC). The latter was a group founded by the city’s leading citizens. Membership was by invitation only, and included the city’s leading bankers, publishers of daily newspapers, merchants, retailers, realtors, and insurance men. The goal of this organization was to promote orderly growth for Dallas, so the city would be attractive to investors. The group had no official powers, but

¹⁶Gerry Cristol. *A Light in the Prairie: Temple Emanu-El of Dallas: 1872-1977*. (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1998), 100.

¹⁷ David Lefkowitz, to Norman Crozier, 6 September 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

¹⁸ David Lefkowitz, to Norman Crozier, 26 April, 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives. No response to this letter exist, so the outcome is unknown; however, the point remains that Lefkowitz considered himself important enough in the city to think that a letter from him to Crozier on this subject would make a difference.

through its influence and prestige, it was able to exercise more influence over municipal and civic affairs than the elected city council, but without the publicity.¹⁹ The CCA's membership was wider than that of its parent, the DCC, and its purpose was to make sure that "the right type of men" were elected to the city council. It became a very effective political party on the local level, selecting candidates, financing their campaigns, and gathering public support.²⁰ Lefkowitz, always a player behind the scenes, as a respected member of the community, recruited other Dallasites to join the CCA. In this way, he had a part in local politics.²¹ Lefkowitz had grown to love everything about his adopted city, including the local college football team, the SMU Mustangs, and he reveled in their victories. In a letter to a friend, he recalled a "splendid trip to Fort Worth to see SMU take the scalp of TCU."²²

During the Depression, Lefkowitz received a telegram from General Hugh S. Johnson, at the National Recovery Administration. (NRA). President Roosevelt had drafted the rabbi to serve as chairman of the NRA's State Adjustment Board in Dallas. The original telegram read:

President Roosevelt has drafted you as chairman of the NRA State Board of Dallas Texas as explained in bulletin number seven of January 22, 1934. He has requested you to volunteer your services without compensation in the important work of making effective in your state the provisions of NRA codes. As Chairman of this Board, you will

¹⁹Michael V. Hazel, *Dallas: A History of "Big D."* (Dallas: Texas State Historical Association, 1997), 47-48.

²⁰Ibid., 48.

²¹David Lefkowitz, to E. E. Hendrix, 30 January, 1937. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²²David Lefkowitz, to Mrs. G. S. Blankenship, February 1936. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

be associated with H. P. Drought, State Director, and his assistant, Sherwood H. Avery, located at 1212 Republic Bank Building, who will supervise the NRA compliance organization for the state of Texas. Please wire your acceptance immediately and report to the executive assistant who will furnish you with further instructions.²³

On a personal note, the Thirties began on a happy note for Lefkowitz, the consummate rabbi and family man. To commemorate his ten years of faithful service to Temple Emanu-El, the congregation honored him at the annual congregation dinner at the Columbian Club on Sunday, May 4, 1930, presenting him with the keys to a new car. The Sisterhood of Temple Emanu-El, organized by Sadie, named the 1930 scholarship to HUC for David Lefkowitz, as their way of commemorating the occasion. Lefkowitz deeply appreciated the scholarship, telling the Sisterhood that “I like to think that in a little way it is my gift to my Alma Mater upon my 30th anniversary of graduation . Knowing the great good these scholarships do, it is an exceptional honor to have one’s name connected with one of them.”²⁴ In December, 1930, Blanche and Lewis presented him with his first grandchild, Lewis Junior, with a second grandchild on the way, a child of his son Harry and Alma.²⁵ Within a year, another grandchild arrived. Fred and Helen

²³ General Hugh Johnson, Washington, D. C., telegram to Dr. David Lefkowitz, Dallas Texas, 21 November, 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives. *The Texas Jewish Herald*, 19 April, 1934. Other members of the board included Walter Hogg, president of the Dallas cotton mills, the employer member of the board, and Clyde I. Vaughn, the president of the State Building Trades Association, as employee representative of the board.

²⁴ *Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 1 May, 1930; David Lefkowitz, to Henry Englander 6 May, 1930. Lefkowitz wrote his friend that the congregation gave him a “classy Chrysler.” David Lefkowitz, to the Sisterhood of Temple Emanu-El, 8 May, 1930. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²⁵ David Lefkowitz, to May Baer Solomon, New York City, 23 December, 1930. Lefkowitz writes an old family friend that “Harry is going to be presented with a scion of his family.” The baby was a boy, who was named James. The family called him “Jimmy.” Temple Emanu-El Archives.

Florence adopted their first child, a boy they named David after his maternal grandfather.²⁶ In 1934, many Dallasites, including Sadie Lefkowitz were aware of the high infant mortality rate. Mrs. Lefkowitz met with Mrs. Lillian Becket, the president of the Dallas Public Health Nurses Association on March 6, 1934, and the rest of the organization in their basement office to try to find a solution to this serious problem. The remedy was the Visiting Nurse Association, (VNA), born out of concern for the health of mothers and their babies. Since Sadie had previously served as founder and president of the VNA in Dayton, she was prepared for the task. In the beginning, the VNA worked with pregnant women and mothers with infants. Sadie Lefkowitz became the first chairman of the Dallas Visiting Nurse Association, and Lillian Becket served as the first president.²⁷

Dallas was no more immune to the hard times the Great Depression brought than any other city, and Temple Emanu-El was affected as well. People began to drop their temple membership because they were unable to pay the dues.²⁸ The Board of Directors had to refinance the parsonage, and reduced Lefkowitz's salary to \$10,000 a year because of the decrease in temple revenues. By April, 1933, his salary was pared down to \$8,400 per

²⁶ David Lefkowitz, to May Baer Solomon, New York City, 28 December, 1931. Lefkowitz writes that "I am again a grandpa- Helen and Fred have adopted a baby boy. He is a splendid little fellow, and the folks are most delighted with their child." It is typical of Lefkowitz's modest manner that he did not mention that the baby was named David after him.

²⁷ *The Dallas Times Herald*, 6 March 1954.

²⁸ Minutes, Board of Directors meeting, Temple Emanu-El, 25 February, 1932. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

annum.²⁹

David Lefkowitz's civic involvement continued during the Thirties, despite financial setbacks. He joined the Board of Directors of the United Charities and the Rotary Club in the early part of the decade.³⁰ His schedule was even more crowded; when invited to become the chaplain of Dallas's Masonic Lodge in July 1933, he had to decline the position, because he simply did not have the time.³¹ He took an active part in promoting the Kessler Plan, a major urban improvement scheme to improve transportation and public recreational facilities in Dallas. On one occasion, he delivered a sermon on the subject to his congregation.³² He also served on the board of the Civic Federation, an organization that led the city to become an outpost for progressive social ideals. In 1934, Lefkowitz was the chairman of the New Era School which this group sponsored. The New Era School held lectures in current religious thought. Lefkowitz delivered some of the talks.³³ Eventually, Lefkowitz became an honorary vice-president of the group. This organization was dedicated to offering adult education in English, economics, religion, and philosophy. Supported by voluntary contributions, such

²⁹ Minutes, Board of Directors, Temple Emanu-El. 30 March, 1933 April, 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³⁰ David Lefkowitz, to George B. Dealey, 24 November, 1930, David Lefkowitz, letter to Mrs. Ruth Duffey, 6 February, 1931. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³¹ David Lefkowitz, to Charles E. Sowman, 5 July, 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³² Jonathon Suratt, Secretary of The Kessler Plan, to David Lefkowitz, 7 November, 1932. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³³ Dr. Umphrey Lee to David Lefkowitz, 28 September, 1934. Archives, Temple Emanu-El.

speakers as Will Durant, Harry Elmer Barnes, Bertrand Russell, and John Dewey were brought to Dallas over the years.

Acting at the request of the anti-Defamation League, ADL), in 1933, Lefkowitz requested that the Dallas Public Library keep *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*), by Adolph Hitler off the shelves. However, four years later, the ADL reversed its decision, and asked the rabbi to see that the city librarians made it available to the citizens of Dallas.³⁴

Lefkowitz was in his early sixties by the 1930s and was sensitive about his age.³⁵ Nevertheless, he continued to keep up his heavy workload; so filled were his days that he wrote his friend, Rabbi Maurice Faber, an apology because he did not have time for to visit with him during a trip Faber made to Dallas. He explained:

That day, I had a meeting at the Temple in the morning; lunch and a lecture at the Highland Park Browning Club; hospital visiting from three forty-five until four o'clock; a Red Cross Executive Board meeting at four, and a B'nai B'rith meeting at the Temple in the evening.³⁶

In addition, his health, never robust, was an additional burden to him; in the fall of

³⁴David Lefkowitz to George A. Levy, 12 September 1933; to Richard Gutstadt, Director, Anti-Defamation League, New York, 23 August 1937. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³⁵David Lefkowitz, to Charles E. Sowman, 5 July 1933, to I.E. Tonkon, 19 May, 1934. Discussing an article, he wrote to Tonkon, "This article reveals my age, about which I happen to be a little tender." The photograph he used for the first twenty years of his life in Dallas was the same; that of a handsome man no older than forty. He wrote to Sowman who had requested a recent photograph for the *Scottish Rite Herald*, saying, "my latest photo, I am sorry to say is seven years old, as I am not so in love with my face as to have it taken often."

³⁶David Lefkowitz, to Dr. Maurice Faber, Tyler, Texas, 14 April, 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

1933, he suffered two serious kidney attacks.³⁷ Clearly, it was time for the rabbi to have some help. Lefkowitz said he would define his new assistant's duties so that no conflict would arise between the two men. Rabbi Stanley Brav became Lefkowitz's first assistant in September, 1934.³⁸ His starting annual salary was \$1,850, but it was raised in 1936 to \$2,400 per year, when Lefkowitz's salary was increased to \$8,700 a year.³⁹ Brav's wife, the former Ruth Englander, was a niece of Henry Englander, a professor at HUC. His duties at the temple included supervising the intermediate department of the religious school and serving as the religious advisor to Jewish students at SMU. Ruth was the supervisor of the religious school's primary department.⁴⁰ The Bravs lived with the Lefkowitzes until they found an apartment, and became close friends.⁴¹

³⁷ David Lefkowitz, to Dr. Henry Barnston, Houston, Texas, 7 November, 1933. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

³⁸ *The Texas Jewish Herald*, 9 August 1934. Brav, a native of Philadelphia, was a 1934 graduate of HUC. He had been a member of the Haverford Institute of International relations when he studied philosophy as a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania in 1932 following his receiving his B. A. degree at the University of Cincinnati in 1931. He also was a member of the first Jewish team of Peace Caravaners under the auspices of the American Friends Service Committees and the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods.

³⁹ Minutes, Board of Directors meeting, Temple Emanu-El, 7 May, 1934, 3 September, 1934. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁴⁰ Stanley Brav, *Dawn of Reckoning; Self-Portrait of a Liberal Rabbi*. (Cincinnati: Temple Shalom, 1971), 107. In a letter to Brav from Julian Morgenstern, the HUC president congratulating Brav on his new position, Morgenstern describes Lefkowitz as a "saintly man and a true prince in Israel." He added that "it is a rare privilege to be associated with him." Julian Morgenstern, letter to Stanley Brav, 19 August, 1934, Ventnor, New Jersey. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁴¹ Sadie Lefkowitz to Stanley and Ruth Brav, 20 July, 1934. Temple Emanu-El Archives. Five days after the Bravs arrived, David and Sadie Lefkowitz left for their annual summer vacation. From Crookstown, Minnesota, she wrote the following in a letter to them: "We

Brav remained for three years, and left to assume the pulpit in Vicksburg, Mississippi, in 1937, following the death of Solomon Kory, the rabbi at that congregation. Kory was a brother-in-law of Sadie Lefkowitz, having married her sister Kitty. Years later, Brav related how Sadie Lefkowitz had engineered Brav's promotion to a pulpit of his own so that David, Jr. could join his father in Dallas.⁴² Since David Jr. had completed his course work, the seminary permitted him to assist his father prior to his graduation, due to the situation created by his father's medical condition. Despite David, Jr.'s not receiving his *smichah*, (rabbinical certificate). Lefkowitz had cataracts in both his eyes, and needed immediate surgery. Since the outcome was not certain, he needed an assistant at once. As it happened, the operation was only partly successful; he was blind in one eye for the rest of his life.⁴³

David Sr. officiated at the ordination of his son in May, two months after he began the job as assistant rabbi at Temple Emanu-El. His father was delighted that his son would be assisting him with his pastoral duties.⁴⁴ His salary was \$2,400 the first year, but within two years, the Board of Directors raised his salary to \$2,625 per annum. This was the first time a father and son had shared a pulpit on the North American continent.⁴⁵

send our love to you, our new dear ones, but since love is not governed by time, we shall include you in the dear ones. Yours, affectionately, Aunt Sadie."

⁴² Stanley Brav, to James R. Alexander, 1 April, 1990. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁴³David Lefkowitz Jr., interview with Ginger Jacobs. Dallas Jewish Historical Society Archives.

⁴⁴David Lefkowitz, to Mrs. Bernard Olsch, 24 March, 1934. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁴⁵ Minutes, Board of Directors' meetings, Temple Emanu-El. 22 March, 1937, 7 March, 1938, 13 March, 1939. Temple Emanu-El Archives. *The American Israelite*, 25

In the spring of 1940, Abraham Brill, the rabbi at B'nai Zion, (Sons of Zion), in Shreveport was ill, and needed as assistant. He asked David Jr. if he would take the job. David Jr. replied that he was already an assistant rabbi, so the job description became one of associate rabbi. Consequently, since this new position was a step up the career ladder, David Jr., Leona and the new baby, David III, moved to Shreveport. A daughter, Helen, and a second son, Henry, would later be born there. Brill died a few years afterward, and David Jr. became the senior rabbi there. He remained in Shreveport, becoming as revered there as his father was in Dallas.⁴⁶ .

By 1934, plans were underway for the Texas Centennial, marking the state's one hundred years of independence from Mexico. On 1 September, 1934, Dallas pledged \$4,000,000 for the project at the State Fair grounds and an additional \$5,500,000 in cash for building purposed to secure the Texas Centennial Exposition. The Centennial Committee in Austin designated Dallas as the central exposition city over rival offers from Houston and San Antonio primarily on the basis of competitive bids, but also because Dallas could met three crucial criteria for a host city: the availability of approximately 200 acres of land suitable for development as a centennial site: provision of all utility services to the site, and finally submission of a monetary offer and an inventory of all properties available. In addition, Dallas had Robert Lee Thornton, the

March, 1937. It was not the first time a father and son had graduated from HUC, however; Martin Zielonka, the rabbi in El Paso, had a son, David, who graduated from HUC in 1929 who became Temple Beth-El's (House of the Lord), rabbi in Corsicana.

⁴⁶Minutes, Board of Directors, Temple Emanu-El Archives, 7, October, 1940,

president of the Mercantile National Bank, who was determined to get the Centennial for Dallas.⁴⁷ Thornton was aided in his quest by the fact that Dallas had experienced forty-six years of handling crowds at the annual State Fairs.⁴⁸ Dallas had grown into a modern city. Eleven trunk railroads, a key air terminal, extensive motor coach lines and the Federal Reserve Bank for the eleventh district of the nation were there. By that time, Dallas led the world in the manufacture of cotton gins and leather goods, and was the paramount jobbing center in the Southwest. The city also boasted two art galleries and two little theater groups that enjoyed national reputations, as well as golf courses, tennis courts, and water sports.⁴⁹

The Centennial committee enlisted the Works Project Administration (WPA) to build the triple underpass for the railroads over Elm, Commerce, and Main streets as the gateway to Dallas, which led to the Centennial grounds, (now Fair Park). The WPA also built a number of the buildings for the Exposition.⁵⁰

Fred Florence, Lefkowitz's son-in-law, served as the president of the exposition.

Helen Lefkowitz Florence was Chairman of the Women's Division of the Centennial, and

⁴⁷Darwin Payne, *Big D: Triumphs and Troubles of an American Supercity*.(Dallas: Three Forks Press, 1994): 160; Maxine Holmes and Gerald Saxon, editors. *The WPA Dallas Guide to History*. (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1992): 98.

⁴⁸ Maxine Holmes and Gerald Saxon. *The WPA Dallas Guide to History*.(Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1992): 97- 98.

⁴⁹Pamphlet, "Texas and the Centennial Exposition." (Dallas: Texas and the Centennial Exposition, 1936),4. Temple Emanu-El Archives. A jobber is a wholesaler in some trades who operates on a small scale and sells his goods to retailers. He is a middle man.

⁵⁰Allison Cheney, *Dallas Spirit: A Political History of the City of Dallas*.(Dallas: McMillan Publishing Company, 1991), 43.

David Lefkowitz became the General Chairman of Jewish Participation for the celebration.⁵¹ He organized the Jewish Advisory Committee for the Texas Centennial Religious Program, with himself as Chairman, his assistant, Stanley Brav as secretary, and his son-in-law, Florence, as the Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Treasurer for the group. Twenty-six rabbis from around the state, Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox, formed the Board of Rabbis, and twenty-five leaders of their respective congregations were on the Board of Congregational Presidents. Three others made up the Board of State Presidents, representing the Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, the Council of Jewish Women, and B'nai B'rith.⁵²

Lefkowitz persuaded Dr. Henry Cohen, the Reform rabbi of Galveston, and Rabbi Ephraim Frisch of San Antonio, Cohen's son-in-law, to put together a pamphlet with him for the occasion, *One Hundred Years of Texas Jewry*. It consisted of several articles Cohen had previously written for the American Jewish Historical Society, an address Frisch had delivered at the Alamo in a ceremony commemorating the 100th anniversary of its fall, and an original essay by Lefkowitz. It was meant both as an educational tool, describing Jewish participation in Texas since its independence, and as a guide to the Jewish Exhibit in the Hall of Religion. This exhibit had been displayed in 1933 and 1934 at the Century of Progress Exhibition in Chicago. It contained illuminated slides

⁵¹ H. Harold Wineburgh, *The Texas Banker: The Life and Times of Fred Farrel Florence*. (Dallas: By the author, 1981): 182, 183, Judge Nelson Phillips, Chairman, Dallas Centennial Exposition to David Lefkowitz, 27 September, 1934. Temple Emanu El Archives.

⁵² Listing, *One Hundred Years of Jewry in Texas*. (Dallas: The Jewish Advisory Committee for the Texas Centennial Religious Program, 1936).

depicting Jewish contributions to art, music, literature, medicine, philanthropy, world peace, care of the sick, the aged, education, and economic growth. In addition, the slides indicated the institutions that Jewish communities throughout the world had set up in order to carry out the ideals that Judaism held sacred.⁵³

It would take \$1,000 to rent the exhibit and pay for transportation. Lefkowitz wrote Henry Cohen that he “shuddered at the cost,” but decided it would be worth the great expense⁵⁴ Lefkowitz was able to get sponsors to pay for the total costs of printing the pamphlet and transporting and renting the exposition, and listed their names in the front of the pamphlet.⁵⁵

The Jewish exhibit was located in Room E in the Hall of Religion, and the Jewish Advisory Committee took out an insurance policy for \$1,000 from May 13 to December 13, 1936 with Palatine Insurance Company of London, England for the exhibit. Underwriters were N. E. Mittenthal and Son.⁵⁶ The Hall of Religion, located on Auditorium Drive, was a white structure 80 x 160 feet. The stockholders of the Lone

⁵³ “Progress Through Religion.” David Lefkowitz, *One Hundred Years of Texas Jewry*. (Dallas Jewish Advisory Committee for the Texas Centennial Religious Program, 1936), 36.

⁵⁴ David Lefkowitz to Dr. Henry Cohen, Galveston, Texas, 10 December, 1934. Temple Emanu-El Archives..

⁵⁵ Ibid. The sponsors were: Edward Titcher, Leslie Jacobs, J. Beren, Max Jaffe, H. S. Jacobus, Lawrence S. Pollack, Arthur L. Kramer, Sol Dreyfus, Eli Wiener, Herbert Mallinson, I. Rude, Hyman Pearlstone, Laurance S. Kahn, Fred F. Florence, Isaac Shayne, Louis Tobian, Armand Roos, Henry I. Bromberg, Herbert Marcus, S. S. Mallinson, and the Dallas section, Council of Jewish Women. Together they raised \$1,650 for this project.

⁵⁶ Centennial folder, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

Star Gas Company built it, and air-conditioned it with natural gas. A building made of stucco over hollow tile, it boasted a built up roof with 30 tons of gravel on it.⁵⁷

Starting June 11, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish groups held vesper services in the Hall of Religion. Christians, Hebrews (sic), Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Christian Scientist, the Salvation Army, the American Bible Society, the Young Mens' Christian Association, (YMCA), and the Gideon Society had exhibits there. The Baptists held vespers the first week; Jewish Week was to be November 1 through the 7th, the last week of the Exposition. Lefkowitz planned a program for Jewish Week. He invited Rabbi Stephen Wise to be the principal speaker at a program for a proposed Jewish Day at the Texas Centennial, Sunday November 1. Wise would have been quite a draw for he was considered to be a confidant of President Roosevelt. Wise founded the Free Synagogue in New York City. This congregation incorporated a social service division for patients at city hospitals and endowed a child adoption center. David and Cecile Florence, two of Lefkowitz's grandchildren, were adopted through Wise's organization.⁵⁸ Since Wise was a Reform rabbi, Lefkowitz and his committee wanted other aspects of Judaism to be represented, so Louis Finkelstein, a professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Conservative seminary; Alfred M. Cohen, representing the International Order of B'nai B'rith; Mrs. Henry Nathan, the President of

⁵⁷*Official Souvenir Guide*. (Centennial Exposition of Texas, Dallas: 1936), 89.
Dallas Times Herald, 7 June, 1936. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁵⁸ David Lefkowitz, to Dr. Stephen Wise, 13 October, 1936, Temple Emanu-El Archives; Roy A. Rosenberg, *Everything You Need to Know About Jews and Their History*. (New York: Penguin (New York: Penguin Putnam Books Inc, 1997), 173-174, Wineburgh, 48.

the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods; as well as Mrs. Arthur Brin, the President of the Council of Jewish Women, were to be invited to speak as well.⁵⁹

In addition to a speaker, the proposed program for Jewish Day originally included vesper services and a lecture each day for a week.⁶⁰ Lefkowitz found that he had to scrap elaborate plans for an entire week, however, for two reasons: lack of funding for the project, and the fact that almost all the Christian denominations had dropped their plans for an entire week of programming because of lack of interest. Attendance at the vesper services were so small that the expense of a week's programming did not seem to justify bringing in speakers, so Wise and the others did not come.⁶¹

Notwithstanding this collapse of the religious aspect, the Centennial was a huge success for Dallas; when it opened June 6, over 250,000 people watched the inaugural parade.⁶² Six days later, on June 12, President Roosevelt visited the grounds at Fair Park, and proclaimed that the Centennial Exposition was not just for Texans but for people of all the other forty-seven states as well.⁶³ Fred Florence introduced the President at the luncheon held in FDR's honor. Roosevelt was the third president to visit Dallas. Although Woodrow Wilson had visited Dallas, it was before his election; William

⁵⁹ David Lefkowitz to Fred Florence, 11 March, 1936. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁶⁰David Lefkowitz to A. L. Vollner, Director or Special Events at the Texas Centennial, 14 May 1946. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁶¹9 October 1936. Minutes, Rabbis and Presidents of local Jewish Organizations for The Centennial. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁶² Payne, 169.

⁶³Ibid.

Howard Taft was the last Chief Executive to make the trip, and that had been in 1909, during the State Fair.⁶⁴ Consequently the excitement over the presidential visit reached a feverish pitch. While Florence was entertaining the Chief Executive, his wife Helen Lefkowitz Florence, in her capacity as Chairman of the Women's Division of the Centennial, entertained the First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt at a luncheon held in her honor at the Baker Hotel. Five hundred women attended the party, and ate a meal prepared by local housewives, including tomato bullion, chicken Florentine, celery hearts, olives, rolls and butter, petit fours and a demitasse.⁶⁵ This was quite an honor for the thirty year old Helen, the Chairman of the Women's Division of the Centennial.⁶⁶

The Centennial was the crowning achievement in the city's years of self-promotion; the public relations value was immeasurable. The Centennial's economic benefits to the city were enormous; hotel business was up 35 per cent; restaurant sales increased 50 per cent; wholesale sales ranged anywhere from 22 to 40 per cent, and local bank deposits increased considerably. Just one month after the Centennial opened bank deposits in the city increased by more than \$30 million dollars over the life of the exposition. By the time the exposition closed on November 29, a total of 6,353,827 people had visited it.⁶⁷ The thousands of people who came to see it created a new and permanent level of visitor activity that was immediately about 50 per cent higher than before. In the year preceding

⁶⁴*Dallas Times Herald*, 11 June, 1936.

⁶⁵*Dallas Morning News*, 12 June 1936.

⁶⁶Wineburgh, 183. Fred Florence was born on November 5, 1891. He was forty-five years old at the time of the Centennial.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 170.

the Centennial, 85,400 people attended conventions in Dallas; in 1939 the number was approximately 122,000. Dallas would never give up its new status as one of America's favorite sites for conventions.⁶⁸ As a result of the Centennial, and the Greater Texas and Pan-American Exposition of 1937, (essentially the Centennial with a new name), Dallas established itself as a dynamic city. Between July 1935 and June 1937 twenty-five articles about Dallas or the Texas Centennial appeared in national publications, and over the next two years eighteen more were published. For the same number of months in the 1933 to 1935 period, the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* lists only one article about the city.⁶⁹

In January, 1935, Martin Weiss, a member of Temple Emanu-El's Board of Directors, sponsored a move to appoint Lefkowitz "Rabbi for Life." The entire board voted unanimously to do so.⁷⁰ Two hundred guests attended the sixty-third annual congregational dinner at the Columbian Club to mark the occasion, fifteen years after Lefkowitz had assumed the Dallas pulpit. The students of the temple's religious school provided the evening's entertainment, a minstrel show.⁷¹ Temple members were not the

⁶⁸Ibid., 196.

⁶⁹ Payne, 170-171.

⁷⁰Minutes, Board of Directors' meeting, Temple Emanu-El, 14 January, 1935, Temple Emanu-El Archives. *The American Israelite*, 8 February, 1935. Lefkowitz was the latest in a series of Texas rabbis to be so honored. Henry Cohen of Galveston, Martin Zielonka of El Paso, and Henry Barnston of Houston had already been named "Rabbi for Life," by their respective congregations, B'Nai Israel, (Sons of Israel), Mount Sinai, and Beth Israel, (House of Israel). Martin Weiss was a philanthropist and was active in civic improvements, especially in Oak Cliff, where he lived. A school in Dallas is named for him.

⁷¹*Dallas Morning News*, 11 February, 1935.

only Dallasites who realized Lefkowitz's contributions to the city. One non-Jew wrote the president of the congregation stating that "we feel that Dr. Lefkowitz belongs to the entire community and we want him to stay for the balance of his days."⁷²

Late in 1938, the German government announced that it was willing to let its Jews leave, providing they had place to go, and if western countries would buy more German goods. Although many Americans were sympathetic to the German Jews' desperate plight, this seemed outrageous, and hardened them against any type of deals with the Third Reich, despite the Jewish crisis.⁷³ In fact, the quotas for Austria and Germany were filled only in 1939, and during the entire crisis the number of refugees entering the country was only ten percent of those legally entitled to visas.⁷⁴ Karl Hoblitzelle, the owner of the Interstate theater chain, a personal friend of Lefkowitz, and a noted philanthropist, planned to turn over the entire gross proceeds from all eighteen of his theaters on Wednesday, December 7, 1938 for the benefit of oppressed German citizens both Jewish and Gentile. Neiman-Marcus published an advertisement for the meeting in the newspaper several days before the event. Lefkowitz suggested to Hoblitzelle how he thought the monies raised could best be divided; 70% to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee; 10% to the Committee for Catholic Refugees; 10% to the United Palestine Appeal, 5% to the International Relief Association; and 5% to the American

⁷²Lindsay Waters to Nathan Mittenenthal, 20 February 1935. Temple Emanu-El Archives..

⁷³*Dallas Morning News*, 5 December, 1938.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 229.

Committee for Christian Refugees.⁷⁵

Admission for the event was fifty cents per ticket. Civic supporters who bought large blocks of tickets to give to friends and employees were The Variety Club, Herbert Marcus Sr., Fred Florence, Sol Dreyfuss, George Schepps and, the Pollock Paper & Box Company. Before the show started in each of the theaters in the Interstate Chain, a speaker addressed the audiences on the subject of the campaign and its aims. Ushers passed through the audience for the benefit of those who wished to donate more money; boxes were placed in each lobby for the same purpose.⁷⁶

Certainly his awareness of the looming disaster for European Jewry was on his mind when Lefkowitz delivered one of his most memorable sermons. It was aired on radio statio WFAA on February 26, 1939, and is entitled, "If I Were A Christian." The sermon began with by tracing the heritage of Christianity back to Judaism. He declared that the conversion of the Roman Empire from paganism to Christianity had changed a government from pagan militarism to a faith that brought Jewish and biblical ethical ideals to a people who heretofore had been morally decadent, and that this new faith replaced despotism by a recognition of the sacredness of the human personality. Under such a noble heritage, he went on, if he were a Christian, he would be ashamed of the persecution of Jews by Christians through the ages; finally, he added, if he were a Christian, he would urge new teaching . The Crucifixion would not be taught as having

⁷⁵David Lefkowitz, to Rabbi Abram Goodman, Austin, Texas, 22 November, 1938, to Karl Hoblitzelle, 1 December, 1938, *Dallas Morning News*, 4 December 1938; 7 December 1938. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁷⁶*Dallas Morning News*, 7 December, 1938.

been perpetuated by the Jews, but by the Romans. Finally, he concluded, if he were a Christian, he would teach that all religions, not only Christianity, were good.⁷⁷

In the autumn of 1939, Southern Methodist University and Temple Emanu-El began a city-wide adult education project called the Community Course. It lasted forty years, and was a successful venture both for SMU and Temple Emanu-El. Dr. Umphrey Lee, David Lefkowitz and Eugene Solow, who later became president of the congregation, were the co-chairmen. To inaugurate the series, they issued a joint statement. "It is the sincere belief of both sponsors that this enterprise will be a distinct contribution to the cultural life of Dallas. Arrangements are being made which will admit SMU students without cost."⁷⁸ The first two programs were Alexander Woolcott, 15 November, 1929, and the Martha Graham dancers on 24 February, 1940. Later programs included Patrice Munsel, the opera singer, the Royal Tahitian Dance Company, the Budapest String Quartet, and the Players of the Royal Shakespeare Company.⁷⁹

It seemed that the citizens of Dallas honored David Lefkowitz in every way possible. Late in 1939, in recognition of his volunteer work, the Dallas County Humane Society awarded him life membership.⁸⁰

The rabbis David Lefkowitz, Junior and Senior, attended the CCAR conference

⁷⁷ David Lefkowitz personal papers, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁷⁸ *The Jewish American*, 23 June, 1939.

⁷⁹ Community Course Programs, 1943-1975. The Community Course Folder, Dallas Public Library Archives, 7th Floor, Dallas Public Library.

⁸⁰ David Lefkowitz, to Herman Nesbitt, Secretary, Dallas County Humane Society 12 December, 1939. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

together in 1938. The elder Lefkowitz delivered a paper, “The Primacy of the Synagog [sic]- How Can it be Maintained?”⁸¹ It was not well received, despite the fact that eight years earlier, he had served as the organization’s president. Sadly, he told his son, “they know not Joseph.”⁸² This may be one of the reasons that, in the spring of 1939, Lefkowitz’s alma mater bestowed honorary doctorates on seven past presidents of the CCAR, including Lefkowitz.⁸³ They were awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity, “in recognition of service to the men of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and to the cause of Judaism and in commemoration of the 56th anniversary of the Central Conference.” Lefkowitz was overwhelmed when he learned he was to receive this recognition from his seminary; he wrote Morgenstern, the HUC president who informed him of this upcoming honor:

Your letter thrilled me beyond any power of description on my part. I appreciate the honor that is being planned for me more than I can say. The Hebrew Union College means so much to me. Not only for what it has given to me but also what it has given to David Jr., and above all what it has given in the way of leadership to American Jewry, that any honor stands highest in my estimation of appreciation. ⁸⁴

Perhaps the highlight of Lefkowitz’s career in Dallas was a banquet Temple Emanu-El held to celebrate his twentieth year in Dallas, his fortieth in the Rabbinate, and his sixty-

⁸¹CCAR yearbook, vol. XLVII, 244.

⁸²David Lefkowitz Jr., autobiography; *Exodus*, 1:8. The verse says, “Now there arose a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph.” Lefkowitz meant that the new guard neither remembered nor cared about him and his past services to the CCAR. David Lefkowitz, Sr., to Virginia Leddey, 22 July, 1938. Archives, Temple Emanu-El.

⁸³*The American Israelite*, 1 June, 1939.

⁸⁴*The American Israelite*, 1 June, 1939; David Lefkowitz, to Julian Morganstern, Cincinnati, 13 February, 1939.

fifth birthday. This gala event took place in the Crystal Ballroom of the Baker hotel, one of Dallas's favorite settings for great celebrations. On Thursday, April 11, 1940, the room filled with leaders in the city's civic, business, religious, and social arenas, "eager to show their admiration for the nationally known Jewish leader."⁸⁵ Mayor Woodall Rogers lauded the rabbi, along with George B. Dealey, the editor of *the Dallas Morning News*. Others praising him were several Christian clergymen, including the Rt. Reverend Msgr. A. Danglmayr for Lefkowitz's efforts in interreligious fraternalism. Dr. Julian Morgenstern, president of Hebrew Union College was the principal speaker. He declared that "of all the rabbis that have gone forth from Hebrew Union College, I may say, Dave, that you are the best beloved."⁸⁶ Lefkowitz was lauded for his work with the Family Consultation Bureau, (formerly the United Charities), the Red Cross, the Astronomical Society, the Civic Foundation, the Community Course, the Rotary Club, the Dallas Humane Society, the Dallas Historical Society, the Critic Club and as one of the organizers of the Dallas Community Chest.⁸⁷ Summing it up, another speaker declared, "'nearly everything worthwhile in our civic, cultural, religious, and educational heart of Dallas bears testimony to the heart and the hand, the brain and the brawn of Dr. Lefkowitz."⁸⁸ With his entire family joining him, including his two brothers Joseph and Herman, the rabbi was overcome. He remembered how his mother had held him up to

⁸⁵*The Dallas Morning News*, 12 April 1940.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*

⁸⁷*Ibid.*

⁸⁸*Ibid.*

point out the Statue of liberty as their ship sailed into New York Harbor. It was then, he said that he began to dream of a better life, and God had granted it to him. He thanked God for the blessings he had received throughout his life, including his wife and family. The congregation gave him a gold watch, and gave Sadie an oil portrait of her husband.⁸⁹

With the Great Depression behind them, and the threat of war ahead, Lefkowitz and his congregation awaited the coming decade .

⁸⁹Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

WAR AND RETIREMENT

Lefkowitz's body was beginning to wear out. He suffered a heart attack just before the High Holy Days in 1941, and was unable to conduct services. Dr. Israel Bettan, a professor of homiletics, the art of preaching, came to Dallas to help Joseph Ginsberg, the assistant rabbi, lead *Rosh Hashonah* and *Yom Kippur* services. As temple membership had grown over the years, the sanctuary filled to capacity, since Lefkowitz had invited all Jews in uniform and in the area to services. Consequently, Ginsberg officiated at parallel rites in the social hall of the temple annex to accommodate the overflow of worshipers.¹ Despite his physical condition, Lefkowitz rallied soon after his heart attack to try to persuade the citizens of Dallas to give generously to the Community Chest. In urging them to be generous, he said:

The Community Chest of Greater Dallas is the pulsating heart of our Dallas fellow-citizens, the index of our concern for the underprivileged, the hero meter of our effort for the character development of our young people, the true measure of our love for our city and its welfare.²

The war years were busy ones of the aging rabbi. He constantly urged his congregants to support the war effort by giving blood, inviting service men into their homes, and by writing them overseas. Two of his sons, Harry and David Jr., volunteered for active duty after American entered the global conflict. Lewis, his oldest son, at age thirty-eight, was

¹*The Dallas Times Herald*, 21 September, 1941. David Lefkowitz, open letter to all area servicemen, 15 September, 1941. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²*The Dallas Times Herald*, 14 October, 1941.

not eligible for the draft. Although Harry, a physician, was only one year younger than Lewis, he entered the medical corps in 1942 with a captain's commission. His tour of duty began in Hot Springs, Arkansas, but later, he went to India, where he remained during the war.³ After his discharge, Harry resumed his pediatric practice in Cleveland, Ohio.

David Jr. enlisted as a chaplain in the Army Air Corps. He entered the service as a lieutenant, but was later promoted to captain. He was originally stationed in Santa Ana, California, for his first year, and found himself the only Jewish chaplain on the base, although there were eighteen chaplains there. David Jr. later was sent to England, where he spent the war. After the war, he joined the American Legion. In 1950, that organization elected him its national chaplain; the second rabbi to hold this office.⁴ While David Jr. was on active duty, the elder Lefkowitz wrote his son, telling him to buy a gift for each wounded or sick soldier, adding that his would reimburse his son for the expenses if the Jewish Welfare Fund refused to do so.⁵

³David Lefkowitz to Mae Baer Solomon, New York, New York, 16 September 1942; to David Lefkowitz Jr. APO 696, New York, New York, 3 July 1945. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

⁴*The American Israelite*, 30 August, 1951. David Lefkowitz, Jr. *Autobiography*, n.p. Temple Emanu-El Archives. Lefkowitz' term was for one year. The first rabbi the American Legion elected was its national chaplain was Lee J. Levenger. His term of office was from 1928 until 1929. At the time of his election, Levenger was serving as the rabbi of the Ohio State University chapter of the Hillel Foundation in Columbus, Ohio. The purpose of The Hillel Foundation, named after a great Jewish scholar, has chapters in nearly every college and university with a sizable Jewish student body. Its purpose is to provide a place for Jewish students to meet one another and to hold services.

⁵David Lefkowitz Sr. to David Lefkowitz Jr., APO 559, Postmaster, New York, New York, 17 April, 1945. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

After V-E Day, the younger Lefkowitz was transferred to the Army of occupation at the Headquarters of the 9th Air Force at Bad Kissinger, Germany. While he was in the area, he visited Dachau, the infamous concentration camp. In Upper Bavaria, in the same part of the country, army intelligence found two railroad cars containing the bodies of over 250 Jews. David Jr. said *Kaddish*, the traditional prayer for the dead over their bodies. In addition, he rededicated a small synagogue in Bad Neustadt that had been desecrated during the war. In his sermon, Captain Lefkowitz emphasized that the ceremony typified the struggle of the United States against oppression. He declared it was “democracy at work, even in the small, out-of-the way places throughout the world.”⁶

As a result of this experiences with the terrible results of the Holocaust, David Jr. changed his thinking and became a staunch supporter of the need for a separate Jewish state, where Jews might find a haven from their tormentors. The idea of a separate Jewish nation or “political Zionism ,” had been a bone of contention among Reform Jews from the start. In its meeting at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1885, the CCAR issued its first manifesto, the Pittsburgh Platform, which declared:

We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.⁷

Clearly, the Reform movement did not envision a national homeland for the Jews, nor did it foresee the need for one. Classical Reform Jews, such as Lefkowitz, saw no need for

⁶*The Texas Jewish Press*, 1 July, 1946.

⁷<http://ccarnet.org/platforms/pittsburgh.html>.

a Jewish homeland; in their view, the Jew was entitled to full citizenship where ever he lived. By 1937, conditions in Europe had become critical for Jews' in response, the CCAR issued a new platform at the annual meeting. Since that body met in Columbus, Ohio, that year, the second declaration of principles is known as the Columbus Platform. With regard to Palestine, it read:

We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its upbuilding, as a Jewish homeland, by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also as a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life.⁸

The vote on this controversial measure was close and unrecorded in the CCAR's minutes; however, it is clear from his letters that Lefkowitz was in the minority on this issue.⁹ Although Lefkowitz was certainly not pro-Zionist in the sense that he initially did not support the idea of a separate country for Jews, family members believed Sadie to be the firebrand of the subject. According to Leona Lefkowitz, her daughter-in-law, Sadie thought that if the Jews were in one central location, they would be easier targets for their enemies.¹⁰

The wistful hope that no need existed for a separate Jewish state grew to become a wedge dividing American Jewry in the early 1940s. Reform Zionists characterized their anti-Zionist CCAR colleagues as assimilationists, while the latter continued to portray the others as secular Diaspora nationalists. Reformers unhappy over the Zionist stance

⁸<http://ccarnet.org/platforms/columbus.html>.

⁹Camille Sevizzi, Archivist, Hebrew Union College, to Jane Guzman, 21 December 1999; David Lefkowitz to Dr. Samuel Golderson, Temple Emanu-El, New York, New York, 16 March, 1942. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

¹⁰Leona Lefkowitz interview, July, 1999.

eventually formed an new group, The American Council for Judaism, in New York City on December 7, 1942. The first anti-Zionist group in American history, this group's impetus was the anxiety felt by a small minority within the CCAR's view of the impact of political Zionism on Jewish existence. In their view, as one of their leaders said, "Zionism's philosophy of despair, which assumes our present situation is hopeless and that democracy is a failure, delayed the Jew's integration into American life, made impossible a peaceful resolution of the thorny Palestine question, and challenged the universalist values of prophetic Judaism."¹¹ The ACJ's strength was in the South. Jews there were small in number and as a rule, highly integrated into the general society. Lefkowitz, for example, spent his life becoming an active part of the greater community of Dallas, and by doing so, set an example for his congregation. His son-in-law, Florence, was an excellent example of a model citizen of the city. Sadie, was also active in communal affairs; in 1941, the Children's Hospital of Texas honored her for the many hours she had spent volunteering there. As part of her accolade, radio station KGKO, (570), named her "Woman of the Week" and Virginia Montegue interview her on the air. In addition, as a way of thanking Mrs. Lefkowitz for her time spent as a volunteer at the

¹¹Monty Noam Penkower, "The Genesis of the American Council for Judaism." *American Jewish History*, (June 1998):192, citing Abraham Shaw to Louis Wolsey, 1 December, 1942, Box 3044, Lazon Manuscripts, Abraham Shusterman to Louis Wolsey, 6 and 26 December, 1942, Box 1449, Wolsey Manuscripts; Julian Morgenstern to Louis Wolsey, 8 January 1943, Box 1448, Wolsey Manuscripts; American Jewish Committee Archives, New York, New York. Julian Morganstern was the president of HUC; Louis Wolsey was the leader of the movement that led to the formation of the ACJ; Abraham Shaw was an initial supporter of the movement but soon became disenchanted with it; Abraham Shusterman was an early supporter of the ACJ who also left the group. Morris Lazon remained a supporter of the movement; so did Lefkowitz. All of these men were Reform rabbis.

Children's Hospital, it named her as one of the sponsors of its Annual Charity Horse Show, its' major fund raising event.¹²

Classical Reform Jews, such as Lefkowitz, hostile to Zionism, defined themselves as a religious group and rejected Jewish nationality. America was their Zion, Judaism was their religion. In addition, in the 1940s, Southern Reform congregations, such as Temple Emanu-El, for example, were dominated by Jews of German descent who were apprehensive about pro-Zionist Eastern European Orthodox Jews gaining control of their temples. Therefore, they supported the ACJ in an effort to stem the Zionist tide and to prevent the erosion of Classical Reform Judaism.¹³ The CCAR, apparently wishing to stay above the fray, issued a statement in 1944 asserting that it had taken a neutral stand on the matter.¹⁴

Lefkowitz declared his intention to join the group in March, 1942, in a letter to Dr. Samuel Goldenson, one of the ACJ's early organizers. In another letter to a close friend, he gave his reason for doing so. He said, "We Jews are essentially a religious entity."¹⁵

Lefkowitz seemed somewhat ambivalent about the whole affair, however; although

¹²*The Dallas Morning News*, 30 October, 1941; 2 February, 1955.

¹³Thomas A. Kolsky. *Jews Against Zionism: The American Council for Judaism, 1942-1948*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 83.

¹⁴*American Israelite*, 29 June, 1944.

¹⁵David Lefkowitz to I. Edward Tonkon, 17 December, 1942; Samuel Goldenson, New York, New York, 23 March, 1943; Temple Emanu-El Archives; Kolsky, 85. Tonkon was one of Lefkowitz's closest friends. His son, Max, organized one of two college chapters of the ACJ at the University of Texas. It had fourteen members. The other college chapter, at the University of Pennsylvania, had twenty-six members. Julius Grodinsky and Stanley Sundheim founded that chapter.

he attained a leadership position in the group, when he accepted the nomination to be a member of its rabbinical group in the National Board of Directors. He also furnished a list of the Temple membership to the ACJ for solicitation purposes, and eventually collected \$956.00 from those wanting to join the group. However, he also sent out subtle signals that his heart was not truly in the movement.¹⁶ For example, Lefkowitz wrote two letters suggesting his mixed thoughts on this subject: In one letter on the subject of the ACJ he wrote, “ we do not wish to make the rift between Zionist and anti-Zionist too deep and wide; and possible, therefore, hurt Jewish communal efforts.” Several years, later, in a letter to Stephen Wise, an ardent Zionist, he assured him that he and Sadie did not “wear the ACJ label on their sleeves.”¹⁷

A great part of the Lefkowitz legacy lies in the fact that Temple Emanu-El stayed together during this time. The opposite happened in Houston when, in 1943, Hyman Schachtel, the rabbi at Beth Israel, (House of Israel), the only Reform temple in town, and a staunch supporter of the ACJ, denied the rights of voting membership to members of the congregation who observed the dietary laws, (*kashruth*), and to followers of Zionism, the movement for a Jewish national state. Such action was unprecedented in the history of an American synagogue.¹⁸ As a result, the temple split between Zionists and

¹⁶David Lefkowitz to Morris Lazaron, 21 April 1943; to Rabbi Elmer Berger, 30 August, 1943. Temple Emanu-El Archives. Berger became the executive director of the ACJ.

¹⁷David Lefkowitz to Jake Gersbaker, Fort Worth, Texas, 11 October, 1943; to Stephen Wise, New York, New York, 16 December, 1946. Temple Emanu-El Archives. No letters from Wise to Lefkowitz survive, but they probably stayed on friendly terms, as they had been friends and colleagues for years.

¹⁸*The Texas Jewish Press*, 11 January, 1943. Beth Israel is the oldest Jewish congregation in Texas, founded in 1859. It started as an Orthodox congregation, but began moving

anti-Zionists. Robert I. Kahn, the assistant rabbi of Beth Israel, was currently in the military serving as a chaplain, but upon his discharge, he became the rabbi at the newly formed Temple Emanu-El in Houston, created by members of Beth Israel who were angered by Schachtel's stance on Zionism.¹⁹

Lefkowitz would never have taken such a hard line. In a letter he wrote to Fred Florence, he summed up his idea of the goal of a temple. He stated., "A Jewish congregation, it seems to me. should neither come out for or against Zionism, but rather for Judaism, which is the united principal of all congregations."²⁰ After he learned the extent of the horror of the Holocaust from his son, David Jr., who saw the terrible aftermath it created, Lefkowitz began to change his mind about the entire matter of Zionism.²¹ In his New Year greetings for 1945 in the Jewish press, Lefkowitz revealed how his thoughts were evolving . He said:

Above all, we think of our own Jewish brothers and sisters who for at least twelve years have suffered under the Nazi terror, in concentration camps with their death chambers. May it be that the pitiful remnant of Israel which remains in Europe, after the murder of millions, find new hope and promise in the Rosh Hashonah greeting. May peace and a new chance come to our Jewish people in Europe, in Palestine, and throughout the world.²²

toward the Reform movement after the Civil War. In 1874, it joined the UAHC.

¹⁹*The Texas Jewish Press*, 28 February, 1944; Hollace Ava Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas: Rabbis and Their Work*.(College Station: Texas A & M Press, 1999), 198-199.

²⁰David Lefkowitz to Fred Florence, 11 April, 1945. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²¹David Lefkowitz Jr. to David Lefkowitz Sr., 25 June, 1945. After his visit to Dachau, The younger Lefkowitz asked his father to request that the congregation donate clothing and soap for "these hapless people."

²²*The Texas Jewish Press*, September, 1945. Undated: New Year's special edition.

In June, 1948, his thinking had completely turned toward supporting the Jewish nation. At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Welfare Federation, the principal fundraising organization for the Jewish community, members were arguing about the distribution of money; some, including the lay membership of the Temple, ACJ members, were reluctant to send it to the new state of Israel. Lefkowitz disagreed, arguing:

Everyone has a right to his position as regards ideology. Although the money is in the bag, if Dallas separates we will be jeopardizing the money we look forward to receiving. Our action may affect other campaigns throughout the country, and might affect \$50,000,000. There is a lack of timeliness. 750,000 people are fighting for their lives in the new state of Israel and many have given their lives for what they consider the best thing in the world. We will be sabotaging their lives. The pride of Israel is involved- The majority of Jews are interested in the establishment of the new state and with God's help the effort will be successful. We should not be put in the position of letting everyone know we are dividing our interests- it will disrupt or render lame their efforts. The timing is bad to consider a break in the Federation- there is time for ideology later on. I was opposed to nationalism before the formation of the new State of Israel, but now I will fight for Israel.²³

It might be argued that this speech was the turning point in Dallas Jewry's complete support for the new Jewish country. Nevertheless, Lefkowitz' name remained on the letterhead of ACJ stationery as late as 1950. However, since he retired in 1949, and no longer kept an office at the Temple; he might have been unaware of this fact. It is also possible that he simply forgot to ask them to remove his name from their letterhead.²⁴

Eleven years later, in a journal article, Irving L. Goldberg, a former president of the

²³Minutes, Board of Directors' meeting, Jewish Welfare Federation, 10 June, 1948. Dallas Jewish Historical Society Archives.

²⁴American Council for Judaism letterhead, 1950. ACJ folder, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

Temple, (1955-1957), wrote, “there is practically no conflict over the support of Israel, and as long as it is the most important philanthropic obligation of our time, all else will be subordinated.”²⁵

Anti-Semitism in Dallas was always a nagging worry. Early in 1941, the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, (ADL), wished to open an office in Dallas. The purpose of the group is to fight anti-Semitism. The ADL’s national director, Richard Gutstadt, wrote Lefkowitz about the matter. After some consideration and conversation with his son-in-law, Lefkowitz wrote Gutstadt that he and Florence had decided that it might be better if the ADL would postpone opening a Dallas office, lest local anti-Semitism the two men believed to be rampant might be “stirred up.”²⁶

After America’s entry into the war, the nation’s intolerance of minorities in general increased; the Detroit Race Riots and the Los Angeles Zoot Suit Riots, of June, 1943, are two examples of xenophobia during this period.²⁷ Anti-Semitism was part of this

²⁵Irving L. Goldberg, “The Changing Jewish Community in Dallas,” *American Jewish Archives*, (April 1959):94. In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson appointed Goldberg, an attorney, to the United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Judicial Circuit, located in New Orleans. Goldberg, the first Jew in the South to hold a federal judgeship, was one of the three circuit judges in 1970 who ruled in the *Roe v. Wade* Case, establishing the right of a women to a legal abortion. The United States Supreme Court upheld this decision in 1973.

²⁶David Lefkowitz to Richard Gutstadt, New York, New York, 3 February 1941. Anti-Semitism was widespread during this time, if somewhat dormant in Dallas in the days preceding world War II, although it would come out in the open later. Lefkowitz, knowing the local community as well as he did, feared the opening of an ADL office in Dallas might be the impetus that could unleash anti-Semitism.

²⁷Leonard Dinnerstein, *Anti-Semitism in America*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 131. Anti-Semitism was more prevalent in the U. S. during the war years than before.

widespread sentiment. For example, during the war years, Alma Lefkowitz, Harry's wife, had trouble getting a job in Cleveland. Friends told her it was unlikely she would ever be hired, despite her qualifications, because of her "Jewish" surname. After the Harry Lefkowitz family became the Harry Leslies, she found work immediately.²⁸

Dallas was no different than other places in this regard, but other cities did not have David Lefkowitz. For example, when the local Department of Public Health issued identification cards to its employees; the terms "Hebrew" and "Jewish" were used to describe race. When the rabbi learned about it, he wrote a letter to the director of the city Health Department, telling him that the term was no more appropriate than the term "Baptist" would be in this instance. The practice stopped.²⁹ In addition, Lefkowitz received a letter from a worried Jewish man in Temple, Texas, repeating a vicious rumor he had heard about the chairman of the Dallas County Local Draft Board No. 8. The rumor was that the chairman, a Jewish man, was allegedly deferring Jews from the service. Lefkowitz sent a copy of the letter telling him this gossip to Edward Titche, the chairman of the draft board in Dallas, and a personal friend of Lefkowitz. At the time, Titche had three nephews who were in the services. Lefkowitz arranged a meeting with Titche and other members of the local draft board, who investigated the charges and sent the results of the investigation to Brigadier General J. Watt Page, the Texas State Director of Selective Service. Page wrote Titche back, and told him that he knew Titche

²⁸Interview, Leona Lefkowitz, July, 1999.

²⁹David Lefkowitz to Dr. J. M. David, Acting Director. Department of Public Health, City of Dallas, 7 May, 1942. Archives, Temple Emanu-El.

was doing a fine job. He stated that the record would show that Titche had never given deferments to Jewish registrants over non-Jews, nor had well-to-do registrants had been favored over the poor. Page also added that he was going to inform the Federal Bureau of Investigation about this vicious slander. In the end, not only did Page exonerate Titche, but praised him for doing splendid work on the draft board.³⁰

During the war years, Dr. A .D. Sartain, a professor of psychology at SMU gave a test to his students in an evening class. Some of the material in the exam appeared to have an anti-Semitic bias, according to two students in the class who complained to Dr. Lefkowitz. The rabbi wrote a letter to Dr. Umphrey Lee, the president of the university, asking him to look into the matter. In his letter, he added, in the postscript, that he was sure that SMU, as “an institution with this religious, Christian background, would be opposed to anything that would generate hatred.”³¹ Within two weeks, Lefkowitz acknowledged an apology from Sartain. The rabbi replied to the professor in his usual, diplomatic way:

I was sure no malice was involved in the form and character of the questions that you put in your test. Assuring you of my appreciation of the letter you sent me, and

³⁰William N. Kirschner, Temple Texas to David Lefkowitz, 42 April, 1942; David Lefkowitz to William N. Kirschner, 27 April, 1942; David Lefkowitz to Edward Titche, 28 April, 1942; William N. Kirschner to David Lefkowitz, 29 April, 1942; David Lefkowitz to William N Kirschner, 29 April, 1942; Secretary, Dallas County Local Draft Board No. 8 to Brigadier General J. Watt Page, State Director of Selective Service, 29 April, 1942; William N. Kirschner to David Lefkowitz, 3 May, 1942; David Lefkowitz to Edward Titche, 7 May, 1942 ;J. Watt Page to Edward Titche, 9 May, 1942; John E. Mitchell to William N. Kirschner, 1 August, 1942. Archives, Temple Emanu-El

³¹David Lefkowitz to Umphrey Lee, 7 February, 1944. Temple Emanu-El Archives.

the sentiments and points of view you there exercise, I am very sincerely yours.³²

Throughout this period, the rabbi's health was not good. His assistant, Joseph Ginsberg, delayed entering the army chaplains's school at Harvard University until autumn of 1943, when Dr. Lefkowitz was back on his feet.³³ When Lou Silverman, his new assistant had arrived, David Lefkowitz resumed his heavy load. He preached every Friday night, delivered his radio address every Saturday, and preached twice on *Yom Kippur*, once in the morning and again in the afternoon service.³⁴ Silverman remained until January, 1945, when he resigned to assume the pulpit in Omaha, Nebraska at Temple Israel. Joseph Buchler took the post of Assistant Rabbi. He remained until April, 1946, when Moshe P. Machenbaum replaced him, staying until Ginsberg's return in September, 1946. One year later, Ginsberg left Dallas to assume his own pulpit, in Peoria, Illinois, at Temple Anshai Emeth (People of the Truth).³⁵ J. Aaron Levy took the post of Assistant Rabbi in February, 1948, but left one year later.³⁶

The Temple celebrated its 70th anniversary in 1942. A respite from the war, the event drew attention from the national Jewish press. The following editorial from the local press was printed nationally. In part, it read:

³²David Lefkowitz to A. D. Sartain, 22 February, 1944.

³³ Jan Ginsberg Flappan to James R. Alexander, 29 May, 1990. Archives, Temple Emanu-El.

³⁴ David Lefkowitz to Leo Asher, Dayton, Ohio, 23 September, 1943.

³⁵*The Dallas Morning News*, 19 September, 1947.

³⁶*Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 1 January, 1945, 8 March, 1945, 2 April 1946, 3 September 1946, 16 February, 1948. Archives, Temple Emanu-El.

Temple Emanu-El has been fortunate in its rabbis, particularly in its present leader, David Lefkowitz. No man in Dallas has more affection and more respect than Dr. Lefkowitz. In many respects, the whole city has been his parish; and as a result of his multiple purposes, Dallas is a more desirable place in which to live.³⁷

When the war ended, Temple Emanu-El was the site of an Armistice Day program. The Jewish Welfare Federation sponsored the event. During the war, the Federation had joined the Dallas County War Chest. Special memorial services honored the twenty-six Jewish Dallasites in the military who died during the conflict. Dr. I. H. Weisfeld of Congregation Shearith Israel led the memorial services. The event also honored the volunteers who participated in the hospitality programs conducted by the Federation. Two hundred and fifty people received certificates of merit and sterling silver pins that William Zale of the Zale Jewelry company donated for the occasion. David Lefkowitz introduced the principal speaker, Dr. Unmphrey Lee, who, in addition to his duties at SMU, was the USO chairman for the state of Texas.³⁸

1947 was a gala year for the Temple, and a busy one for the Doctor. During the weekend of March 7th and 8th, the congregation observed its seventy-fifth anniversary. The congregation made extensive plans for an elaborate celebration. Aline Rutland, Lefkowitz's secretary contacted descendants of pioneer families and earlier rabbis for pictures and information to go into the souvenir program distributed at the dinner, held at

³⁷*The Dallas Morning News*, 15 March, 1942; *The American Israelite*, 19 March, 1942.

³⁸*The Dallas Times Herald*, 11 November, 1945; minutes, Board of Directors' meeting, Jewish Welfare Federation, 28 November, 1945. Dallas Jewish Historical Society Archives.

the Baker hotel in the Crystal Ballroom.³⁹ The actual celebration started on March 7, which was a Friday night. All the rabbis who had served at Temple Emanu-El were invited. William Greenberg, who had held the pulpit prior to Lefkowitz was the only one not to attend. Greenberg had left the rabbinate and had become an agent for the Mutual Life Insurance Company in New York. He sent his regrets to Lefkowitz.⁴⁰

Eugene M. Solow, the congregation's president, hosted a luncheon Saturday afternoon at the Columbian Club for the Lefkowitz family and the out-of-town rabbis and other invited guests who had come to Dallas for the occasion. Temple Emanu-El paid all the expenses of the rabbis who came to Dallas for the celebration that would honor their beloved Doctor. The Texas contingent included the rabbis Wolfe Macht, Waco, Harvey Wessel, Tyler, Ernest Gey, Corsicana, Samuel Baum, Austin, Allen Hein, Houston, Hyman J. Schachtel, Houston, Samuel Silver, Fort Worth; Israel Sarahsohn, Marshall, and Walter Barosh, the army chaplain at Brooke Army Hospital in San Antonio.⁴¹ Eli Weiner and Louis Tobian, past presidents of the Temple, (Tobian would serve as president again), and Fred Florence, perennial treasurer, and son-in-law of the rabbi, joined Solow in paying for the luncheon, which one hundred and twelve people attended.

³⁹Aline Rutland to the President, Temple Shaara Shomayim, Mobile, Alabama, 26 December, 1946; Aline Rutland to Mrs. Arthur Star, Committee Chairman, 75th Anniversary, 30 December, 1946. December, 1946; Aline Rutland to the President, Temple Shaara Shomayim, Mobile Alabama,

⁴⁰Cristol, 144.

⁴¹Undated note, 75th Anniversary file, Archives, Temple Emanu-El.

Florence insisted upon paying the full cost of the table decorations.⁴²

Six hundred people attended the banquet held Saturday night. Dignitaries included Dr. Julian Morgenstern, Lefkowitz's great friend and the president of HUC, Dr. Maurice N. Eisendrath, the president of the CCAR, who brought with him the congratulations and greetings from three hundred congregations, and a host of prominent Dallasites. Religious leaders attending included the Rev. Gerald Moore, president of the Dallas Pastors Association, and the mayor of Dallas, Woodall Rogers, who praised the members of Temple Emanu-El "for their great contribution to the social, religious, cultural, and economic life of Dallas." Rogers summarized the history of the congregation as "seventy-five years of achievement."⁴³ After the speakers honored Lefkowitz for his leadership of the congregation during the last twenty-seven years, it was his time to speak. He asked Sadie to rise and receive her proper recognition for all she had done. Speaking of his wife, he said, "I want to lay all the praise at her feet. She has been my constant helpmate for forty-six years."⁴⁴

The local paper covered the gala event as well. In an editorial on Sunday, March, 9, *The Dallas Morning News* wrote the following tribute:

Temple Emanu-El has been fortunate in its Rabbis, particularly in its present leader, Dr. David Lefkowitz. No man in Dallas has more affection and more respect than Dr. Lefkowitz. In many respects, the whole city has been his parish; and as a

⁴²E. M. Solow to Eli Weiner, Fred Florence, and Louis Tobian, 10 March, 1947. Archives, Temple Emanu-El.

⁴³*The Dallas Morning News*, 9 March, 1947.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

result, of his multiple purposes, Dallas is a more desirable place in which to live.⁴⁵

In January, 1943, David Lefkowitz had made the final payment to the Temple toward the purchase of his house. A few years later, he and Sadie no longer needed as much space, so they sold the house to Wilbert B. Rasansky on July 1, 1947, and the Lefkowitzes moved into the Maple Terrace Apartments, their last home⁴⁶ This building was the residence of choice among the retired members of his congregation; when Lefkowitz was asked about his new home, he said, “You could get a *minyán* by shouting door to door.”⁴⁷

The congregation honored David Lefkowitz again on December 11, 1948. The banquet at the Baker Hotel was in recognition of his years of devoted service to Temple Emanu-El. Lefkowitz’s old friend I. Edward Tonkon was the master of ceremonies. The congregation presented him with a television set, a book containing the signatures of the guests at the dinner, and praise for his leadership during the last twenty-eight years at the Temple. A donor who wished to remain anonymous told the rabbi he was donating \$25,000 toward a new building program for the Temple. For his part, the Doctor promised that he would stand “three paces to the rear” after his retirement and not interfere with Dr. Levi Olan, his successor, but he added that he would always be handy for the congregation or any that needed him. Olan fondly remembered

⁴⁵Ibid. *The Texas Jewish Post* reprinted the entire article in its issue of 3 April, 1947.

⁴⁶Deed of Sale, Temple Emanu-El to David Lefkowitz, 27 January , 1943; Deed of Sale, David and Sadie Lefkowitz to Wilbert B. Rasansky, 1 July, 1947, Records Building, 2nd Floor, Dallas, Texas.

⁴⁷ David Lefkowitz Jr., interview with Ginger Jacobs, Austin, Texas, 27 January, 1983. Dallas Jewish Historical Society Archives.

Lefkowitz in later years for his overwhelming kindness to him⁴⁸ Herbert Marcus, who helped persuade Lefkowitz to come to Dallas so long ago said of the man who had been his rabbi and friend for so many years, “the greatest achievement of my noble friend is that he has always defended the rights and dignity of men.”⁴⁹

Prior to the banquet, Lefkowitz summed up his personal philosophy in an interview. He said:

And now I come to up with a simple belief I knew when I was a young man. It is this: There is a tremendous happiness in service- helping to lighten the burden of others and doing the job to which you have dedicated your life with the greatest that is within you...No greater joy has been known to a man than that which was given to me through friendships built up through the years. I am fortunate. My entire ministry had given me a chance to serve in the general community with friends in all lines of work and of all denominations.⁵⁰

Lefkowitz added that he believed that the majority of his success might be attributed to his wife, Sadie, whose “unending faith carried him to two of the most eminent positions in Ohio and Texas religious circles.” Continuing, he added that he did not believe in church barriers; he had preformed marriage ceremonies for all denominations, and had spoken in almost every pulpit in Dallas. In return, he urged other minsters to speak to his congregation. The interview concluded with this statement:

I felt most humble the day I was asked to conduct funeral service for Cullen Thomas, a great Dallas Baptist. That is the way religion should be. The satisfaction which I have known as a result of my preaching could not have been duplicated in any other calling.⁵¹

⁴⁸Levi Olan, interview with Gerald Saxon, Dallas, Texas 2 February, 1983. Dallas Public Library.

⁴⁹*The Dallas Morning News*, 12 December, 1948.

⁵⁰*The Daily Times Herald, Dallas*, 10 December, 1948. The author edited the speech.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

On Friday night, January 7, 1949, David Lefkowitz stepped down as senior rabbi at temple Emanu-El, and became the congregation's first Rabbi Emeritus. Levi A. Olan of Worcester, Massachusetts was his replacement. Olan was installed by Dr. Nelson Glueck, the president of Hebrew Union College. So many people crowded into the sanctuary of the temple for this auspicious occasion that all seats were taken and some had to stand for the entire ceremony. It is indicative of the importance Lefkowitz brought to this pulpit that so illustrious a rabbi as Glueck would travel to Dallas for the ceremony. In his installation address, Olan declared Lefkowitz to be "one of the great Jewish leaders in America."⁵²

Upon his retirement, the Dallas Jewish community donated \$7,200 to initiate the David Lefkowitz Scholarship to his alma mater, Hebrew Union College in appreciation for his great services to his congregation and his city. The Reverend Robert St. Clair was the first recipient. The three year scholarship he received enabled the Baptist minister to continue his studies in Semitics.⁵³

Lefkowitz continued, as Rabbi Emeritus, to draw a salary from the Temple, \$12,000

⁵² Cristol, 261. *The Dallas Morning News*, 7 January, 1949; *The Texas Jewish Post*, 29 January, 1949. Glueck, a noted archaeologist, was the former director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. His fame came during 1938 to 1940, when he excavated ruins of King Solomon's seaport at Ezion-geber, near Aquabah on the Red Sea. discovering copper smelting. This proved that men at that time knew the secrets of the blast furnace. The story in the local Dallas paper gave far more coverage to Dr. Glueck than to Levi Olan, who would embark on a distinguished career at the pulpit Lefkowitz developed.

⁵³David Lefkowitz to Louis Witt, 23 April, 1948; Archives, Temple Emanu-El; *The Texas Jewish Post*. 21 July, 1949. This scholarship was given only once to Reverend St. Clair.

per year, the same amount he received in the 1920s. This money continued for the rest of his life, since there was no retirement fund for him;. The \$10,000 insurance policy in 1920 upon Lefkowitz's arrival in Dallas was canceled during the Depression.⁵⁴

David Lefkowitz's official duties at Temple Emanu-El ended; he taught his last confirmation class in the spring of 1948, and no longer kept an office at the Temple. His radio sermons ended with his final broadcast on January 2, 1949.⁵⁵ Although he continued to visit the hospitals, to marry couples who requested him to officiate at their weddings, and to lecture at SMU, the Lefkowitz years at Temple Emanu-El were over.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Louis Tobian, President, Temple Emanu-El, to T. I Levitt, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 30 July, 1952. Archives, Temple Emanu-El.

⁵⁵*Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, January, 1949. Archives, Temple Emanu-El..

⁵⁶Olan, Saxon interview. Olan was grateful to Lefkowitz for continuing his hospital visits; if Lefkowitz did it, Olan did not have to perform this duty, which was not to his liking.

CHAPTER 5

EPILOGUE AND LEGACY

Late in October, 1951, the congregation of Temple Emanu-El honored Dr. and Mrs. Lefkowitz on their fiftieth wedding anniversary by donating \$1,300 to the Bridwell Library at Perkins School of Theology at SMU for the purpose of setting up the Sadie and David Lefkowitz collection of Judaica.¹ As he presented the check, Levi Olan declared that the contribution was an expression of the fondness and love which and entire community feels for two of its most worthy citizens.” He added, “we of Temple Emanu-El feel that it is a rare privilege to honor two of our loved ones though increasing the service of one of the great schools of our country.”

Dr. Merrimon Cunningham, the dean of the Perkins School, received the check. As he accepted it, he stated, “These were Jewish folk honoring their distinguished rabbi and his lady and the repository to which they directed their gift was the library of a Protestant seminary. This is testimony to the oneness of humanity.”²

1951 was also the year that John Q. Beaty, a tenured professor of English at SMU privately published his book, *Iron Curtain Over America*. An anti-Semitic diatribe, it was widely read, eventually went into nine printings, and sold approximately 45,000 copies. It even had some influence among far-right groups in the presidential election of 1952.³

¹*The Dallas Times Herald*, 26 October, 1951.

²*The Dallas Morning News*, 24 October, 1951.

³Hill, interview with Margaret Hartley, Associate Editor of the *Southwest Review*, Dallas, Texas, May 4, 1966, 57.

Although the SMU press did not publish the book, the university worried about possible fallout among the Dallas Jewish community, which had enjoyed a long friendship with SMU, due in a large part to David Lefkowitz's receiving his honorary degree, the success of the Community Course, the fact that Hyer Hall on the university's campus was used by students of Temple Emanu-El's religious school since there was not enough classroom space on South Boulevard, and because of general mutual goodwill of Dallas' Jewry for SMU.

Although there seemed to be no coordinated effort against Beaty, local voices made sure they were heard denouncing his book. On January 11, 1952, SMU's student paper, the *Daily Campus* published an extremely critical review of it. Evidentially Beaty's reputation preceded him; the student writing the critique says the book, "is just about what students of Dr. Beaty would expect." The article ends with another observation worthy of a Christian school: "the author is vitally concerned with preserving Christianity, a religion whose founder's racial antecedents were unquestionably Jewish."⁴ Later letters written to the newspaper were equally critical of Beaty and called for some type of action on the part of the university.⁵ The local Dallas press was equally severe on Beaty's book. In a column early in 1952, Lynn Landrum, a book editor writing for *The Dallas Morning News* declared *the Iron Curtain Over America* "outlandishly unkind, unscientific, and unhelpful."⁶ Toward the end of 1952, Lon Tinkle, a noted

⁴*Daily Campus*, 11 January, 1952.

⁵ *Daily Campus*, 20 February, 1952; November 13, November 25, 1953; February 10, February 26, 1954.

⁶Lynn Landrum, "Thinking Out Loud," *The Dallas Morning News*, 16 February, 1952.

writer, who was also a professor of English at SMU (and incidentally, a colleague of Beaty's), and the most important book critic for *The Dallas Morning News*, declared Beaty's book the worst book of the year.⁷

The *Southwest Review*, an SMU publication, ran an essay by Margaret L. Hartley, "The Protestant Underground," in its Autumn issue of 1953. Hartley was extremely critical of Beaty's book, and cited an undated statement in *Zion's Herald*, America's oldest Methodist newspaper, that called *Iron Curtain Over America* "the most extensive piece of racist propaganda in the history of the anti-Semitic movement in America."⁸ Following the article in the *Southwest Review*, Beaty continued his tirade. Early in 1954 he published a pamphlet, "How to Capture a A University." Beaty said that the pamphlet was a defense against the attack waged against in him Hartley's article in the article in the *Southwest Review*. In this pamphlet, Beaty declared that the Anti-Defamation League was a "Jewish Gestapo," and criticized SMU's Perkins School of Theology for accepting a gift from the B'nai B'rith of seventy-five dollars. In Beaty's opinion, the donation came with strings for the "realization of the donor's ideals."⁹ Beaty denounced the Community Course, a joint effort of Temple Emanu-El and SMU to bring varied cultural programs to Dallas at a nominal cost. He declared:

⁷Lon Tinkle, "Our Own Citations for This and That." *The Dallas Morning News*, 7 December, 1952. Tinkle declared that he was torn between *The Lovers* by Kathleen Winsor and Beaty's book, but decided to award the Tinkle citation for worst book of the year to Beaty since "Miss Winsor is merely confused about sex, but Mr. Beaty is confused about a good deal more."

⁸Margaret L. Hartley, "The Protestant Underground." *Southwest Review* Vol. XXXVIII, No. 4, (Autumn, 1953), 344.

⁹John Beaty, "How to Capture a University," 20 January, 1954, privately published, 2, 7.

One non-Christian congregation has been equaled for some fifteen years with the capstone Methodist University of eight states and many conferences. Persons hostile to Christianity and to the decencies of its civilization have sought since the summer of 1932 to undo the University.¹⁰

Following the publication of the pamphlet, six professors at SMU's law school issued a statement condemning Beaty and his views. The entire faculty of the university appeared to close ranks against him, and issued a public statement:

We, the Faculty of Southern Methodist University ...hereby declare our belief that the charges made by Dr. Beaty to the effect that certain forces hostile to Christianity are seeking to "wield power and influence policy" in the University's Councils, are without any foundation in fact.¹¹

There was little SMU's administration could do about the situation, since Beaty was a tenured professor. Prior to the pamphlet's publication, Umphrey Lee made a speech about the situation to the Dallas Salesmanship Club in February, 1953. Apparently hoping to defuse the matter, and certainly wishing it would go away, Lee stressed the school's attitude toward religious freedom. He stated that "anti-Semitism is a deadly sin, and so are anti-Protestantism and anti-Catholicism." Lee added that Jews and Catholics had served on the SMU faculty and that one of the few honorary degrees awarded went to a "distinguished rabbi." (Lefkowitz). Lee concluded the speech by saying that there is

¹⁰*Dallas Morning News*, 11 February, 1954; Beaty, 7. One of Beaty's complaints was that the SMU bookstore refused to sell his book although it carried books by Trotsky and Engels. Beaty viewed this as a Jewish conspiracy, since he considered Communism to be Jewish. In his mind, only Christian civilization was non-Communist. *Iron Curtain Over America* was available in several Dallas bookstores; Cokesbury, McMurray's, the University Pharmacy, and the Presbyterian Book Store. It was also available through Beaty's publisher, Wilkinson Publishing Company, 1717 Wood Street, Dallas, Texas, for three dollars postpaid.

¹¹Hill, 63; citing Public statement of the Faculty of Southern Methodist University, 16 February, 1954.

room for disagreement, ended by saying:

This country is the refuge of the tired but hopeful people of all lands who believe here that a man's religion or his birth will not be held against him. That hope we must continue to justify."¹²

Lee took a stronger stand after the pamphlet came out, however, and asked the University's Board of Trustees to look into the matter. Lee declared that he "desired publicly and gladly to take full responsibility for the cordial relations existed then between the university, Temple Emanu-El, B'nai B'rith, and other religious groups in the city. He continued. "I accept full responsibility for the cooperation of the university with Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish leaders in the National Conference of Christians and Jews. ¹³ SMU's Board of Trustees set up a committee to investigate Beaty's allegations. Hearings concluded in May, 1954. The conclusion of the hearings stated the following:

The material facts do not bear out the allegations made by Doctor Beaty in his pamphlets... the aim and hope of the University is to produce and promote wholesome and superior intellectual life under the guidance of positive and moral and spiritual ideals. All persons who find themselves out of harmony with these principles and unable to support these ideals ought to retire from the University, and no teaching is tolerated which is in conflict with Christian principles.¹⁴

In the end, Beaty remained at SMU until his retirement in 1957. However, when Lee retired and Dr. Willis Tate, the school's new president, took office, one of his first acts as president of the University was to lay out, in no uncertain terms, Beaty's relationship to

¹²*Dallas Morning News*, 13 February, 1953.

¹³*The Daily Times Herald*, 14 February, 1954.

¹⁴Hill, 66, citing the Report of the Beaty Committee to the Board of Trustees, 6 May, 1954, signed by J. M. Willson, Floyd B. James, S. J. Hay, Bishop H. Bascom Watts, J. S. Bridwell, Doctor W. W. Ward, D. A. Huley, Chairman.

SMU and the responsibility this relationship entailed, as explained in the report of the Beaty Committee. For the next few years, as long as Beaty remained at SMU, he never made any public statements, anti-Semitic or otherwise, that might reflect in any way on Southern Methodist University.¹⁵

As the Beaty controversy began, and while it lasted, Lefkowitz began to lecture at SMU in the spring of 1951 in the Perkins School of Theology at SMU. His course was entitled “Contemporary Judaism.” He repeated his course in the spring of 1952, and again, in the spring of 1953. It was listed in the 1953-1954 catalogue of courses, but Lefkowitz was unable to return to the campus that spring, due to his failing health. He was the first rabbi to teach at that Methodist school of theology.¹⁶

David Lefkowitz assembled a collection of sermons and address he had delivered over the years, and Levi Olan edited them and put them into a book. The SMU press, had already accepted Lefkowitz’ book, *Medicine for a Sick World*, but rushed it out ahead of schedule on December, 1952 , in part to counteract the impact of Beaty’s book on the Jewish community , which had been as long-time supporter of SMU. It was the first book that the Methodist university press had ever published that was written by a Jew.¹⁷ The book’s title came from a sermon Lefkowitz delivered December 8, 1940. The sermon was based on Ezekiel 47:12, which contains the phrase “the fruit thereof shall be for food

¹⁵Hill, 67, citing interview with Willis Tate, 11 April, 1967.

¹⁶Perkins School of Theology, SMU Catalogs, 1950-1951, 5; 1952-1953, 8; 1953-1954, 8; *1952 Rotunda*, 27. The 1951-9152 catalog is missing.

¹⁷Allen Maxwell, former director, SMU Press. Telephone conversation with author, 12 August, 1999. Notes. *The Dallas Times Herald*, 23 December. 1952.

and the leaf therefore for healing.”¹⁸ The rabbi dedicated the book to Sadie. The inscription reads, “with devotion for my wife of fifty years.”¹⁹

Umpfrey Lee wrote the preface to the volume. He said:

It is an honor to be asked to write the preface to this book of essays and sermons by Doctor David Lefkowitz, Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Emanu-El. There are both personal and professional reasons for my pleasure in writing these brief words. Three years after Doctor Lefkowitz came to Dallas to be the rabbi at Temple Emanu-El, I came to the city to be the pastor of the Methodist church. For nearly thirty years we have been associated in various ways, particularly in connection with Southern Methodist University. I can testify out of this more than a quarter of a century of personal knowledge and association with Doctor Lefkowitz to his stature as a spiritual leader. Very fittingly, this volume is published by the Southern Methodist University Press. The essays and sermons are of a quality that would do honor to any university. They give an insight in to the best thinking of the liberal Jewish community in this country and they have an independent value for their spiritual and moral qualities. Nearly two and a half decades ago this University conferred an honorary degree on Doctor Lefkowitz, and this book is only an added justification for that degree.²⁰

During the thirty years Lefkowitz had lived in Dallas, the demographics of the city changed. His congregation had grown so large that the services for the High Holy Days had to be held in the State Fair Music Hall so that everyone could attend.²¹ In addition, the Jewish population had migrated north.²² The temple on South Boulevard was not conveniently located for its members anymore. Originally, plans were made for a new building to be erected on Turtle Creek between Blackburn and Lemmon Avenue, where

¹⁸Klein, *The Lefkowitz Years*,” 16.

¹⁹Lefkowitz, *Medicine for a Sick World*, Dallas: SMU Press, 1954, flyleaf.

²⁰*Ibid.*, vii.

²¹Ginger C. Jacobs. “A Comparison of the Dallas Jewish Population of 1953-54 With That of 1939-1940.” Master’s thesis, Southern Methodist University, 1954, 7. By 1953, 51% of Dallas’s Jews were members of Temple Emanu-El.

²²*Ibid.*, 27.

the Dallas Theater Center now stands. This site was abandoned for two reasons: there was not enough space for parking, nor was it accessible to many members. After Sylvan Baer, the donor of this site, insisted that no mortgage be attached to the new building, the site was abandoned for a new one. Helen and Fred Florence bought twenty acres of land at the corner of Hillcrest Road and the Northwest Highway, and donated it to the congregation for the new site for Temple Emanu-El. The David Lefkowitz Chapel is there. A small, white room, washed with light from the stained-glass windows, it is a place of peace and respite from the busy world, a fitting tribute to this gentle man. The original covers for the *Torahs*, or sacred scrolls in the ark there were made from his ceremonial robes.²³ Money raised by the Sadie Braham Lefkowitz Memorial Fund paid for the pews needed to furnish the chapel.²⁴

The aging rabbi had never been in excellent health, and his condition began to seriously deteriorate. By the summer of 1953, David Lefkowitz was too ill to leave his apartment.²⁵ In the last eighteen months of his life, he suffered a severe stroke and became blinded and bedridden. He spent his last days in Baylor hospital, unable to talk.²⁶

²³ Minutes, Temple Emanu-El Board of Directors, 29 January, 1953, Temple Emanu-El Archives; Wineburgh, *the Texas Banker*; 203 Cristol, *A Light on the Prairie*, 160-163. Klein, 1994 interview. Edwin Tankus, a Temple member and personal friend of Lefkowitz was a professional tailor. He made the *Torah* covers from the rabbi's white robes Lefkowitz wore on the High Holy Days. The covers have since vanished; Rabbi Klein speculated in 1994 that they may have just worn out and needed to be replaced with new ones.

²⁴ *Temple Emanu-El Bulletin*, 25 January 1956., Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²⁵ Louis Tobian to T. I. Levitt, 30 July, 1952, Temple Emanu-El Archives.

²⁶ It is likely that Lefkowitz's medical expenses were paid by Fred and Helen Florence, although no records exist to prove it. It is doubtful that Lefkowitz had enough money

His family was not sure he was even aware of his condition, due to his inability to communicate.²⁷ Sadie, died in February, 1955 of cancer, and his family doubted that he knew he had lost his beloved helpmate. The Sisterhood of Temple Emanu-El, which she began, dedicated its 1955 yearbook to her and her husband with these inscriptions:

Dedicated to the memory of Sadie Brahm Lefkowitz: A woman of valor, who can find? For her price is far above rubies. Proverbs, 31:10

Dedicated to the memory of Rabbi David Lefkowitz: the memory of the righteous shall be a blessing. Proverbs, 10:7.²⁸

Sadie's legacy continued with the growth of the Visiting Nurse Association. The organization she helped create developed an outreach program to instruct and assist women with proper prenatal care. The VNA also offered help to these women in caring for their newborns and young children.²⁹ In 1935, the Dallas County Medical Society endorsed the VNA and it became a Community Chest affiliate. The VNA established such innovative services as delivering hot food to shut-ins, hospice care for the terminally ill, and home health care. The VNA's first office was at 1901 North Harwood Street where The Junior League of Dallas and the National Council of Jewish Women, Dallas Section, paid the rent, ten dollars a month. In 1939, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Pollack Sr. donated the family home of Mrs. Pollack to the VNA for new headquarters.

to pay for his own hospitalization.

²⁷Leona Lefkowitz. Interview by Jane Guzman 17 July, 1999. Tape Recording.

²⁸1955 Yearbook, Sisterhood of Temple Emanu-El, flyleaf. As of 1952, the flyleaf in the Sisterhood yearbooks carry the inscription, "Organized in 1921 by Sadie Brahm Lefkowitz."

²⁹Freda Gail Stern, "The Visiting Nurse Association." *Dallas Jewish Life*, 6 March, 1993, 23; *The Dallas Times Herald*, 6 March, 1954.

The address was 2831 Ervay in the Cedars, one of Dallas' earliest fashionable neighborhoods. Six years later, the VNA needed larger quarters, since it had grown to employ six full-time nurses, one half-time nurse, the groups' first Executive Director, Ginger Bates, and a secretary.³⁰ Over the years, the VNA has met new challenges and needs of the community. For example, the VNA started a Meals on Wheels program in 1973 to bring food to shut-ins. The Women's Council of Dallas took over this program in 1997. In April, 1975, the VNA started the first comprehensive home care program in Texas, in cooperation with the Texas State Department of Public Welfare and the first day car center for the elderly in Dallas; in 1988 the organization trained and dispatched a program to treat AIDs patients at home, and in 1998, the VNA included the Elder Care Association, a group of trained workers to take seniors to the grocery store, on errands and to help them with chores around the house.³¹

By 1993, the VNA had its own building at 1440 Mockingbird Lane. The organization had expanded by that time to serve approximately 16,600 people a year in 47 Texas counties. Major financial support throughout the years has come from many local source, including in the Dreyfuss and Pollack Foundations.³²

On June 5 of the same year, 1955, Lefkowitz breathed his last. Ironically, it was the day of the groundbreaking for the new Temple. Since he had been so closely associated with the old Temple in South Dallas, it almost seemed like a sign that an era had ended.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹*The Dallas Morning News*, 18 April 1975; 5 May 1975; 9 June, 1998; *The Dallas Times Herald*, 24 September. 1988.

³²*The Dallas Morning News*, 9 June, 1998.

News of his death was on the front page of both local newspapers, indicating his prominence in the city. *The Dallas Times Herald* ran an editorial and praised the gentle rabbi and his contributions to the city he loved:

For 35 years Dr. David Lefkowitz has been outstanding among the foremost community leaders in Dallas. His passing at 80 years of age brings sorrow to all who knew him, but only Dallas residents who knew him in his prime appreciate fully his value to this city.

Dallas has been called a man-made city because no one industry is responsible for its growth. Since Dr. Lefkowitz came here in 1920, he has been a striking example of the kind of man that it takes to build a city that is something more than houses and streets. He played a major part in creating the so-called Dallas spirit.

Dr. Lefkowitz, as rabbi of Temple Emanu-El was above everything else a religious leader and he had national-in fact, international-prestige as such. [sic]. But he was a scholar, respected by scholars in all fields. To him, history, literature, music, and other fine arts were daily sources of inspiration and enjoyment. But he was no recluse. At times he became a man of action, a thrilling orator, a forceful writer, and a skillful organizer.

It was fortunate, indeed, for Dallas when Dr. Lefkowitz was persuaded to come to this city from Dayton, Ohio, by Herbert Marcus, Arthur Kramer, and others of the Temple Emanu-El congregation. He came here at the summons of his own religious group, but in a short time he became an all-Dallas institution. It has been said that all men have their shortcomings, but if Dr. Lefkowitz was lacking in any of the qualities that cause men to be respected, honored and loved, his fellow citizens in Dallas were not aware of the fact.³³

In her book, *A Light on the Prairie; Temple Emanu-El of Dallas, 1872-1997*, Gerry Cristol described the rabbi as his students saw him:

For years afterward, when his confirmands fondly remembered this saintly looking, handsome, cleft-chinned gentleman rapping his imposing signet ring on the podium to quiet, in one small motion, a noisy bunch of teenagers, they were fully aware that this small gesture epitomized the power of a man both commanding and benevolent, wise in the ways of the human heart.³⁴

The legacy of David Lefkowitz continued for decades after his death. Many of his congregants have followed his example of serves to improve the quality of life in the city

³³ *The Dallas Morning News*, 6 June, 1955; *The Dallas Times Herald*, 6 June, 1955.

³⁴Cristol 146.

he loved. Pike Park, Zale-Lipshey Hospital, the Nasher Sculpture Garden at the Dallas Museum of Art, and the Linz Award are some examples of efforts Jews have made in Dallas to improve the quality of life for all citizens, regardless of religion.³⁵ A number of Dallas public schools are named after members of Lefkowitz's congregation, including Fred Florence, Victor Hexter, Arthur Kramer. Herbert Marcus, Alex Sanger, Harry Stone, Edward Titche and Martin Weiss.³⁶

³⁵Amy Simpson, *Pike Park: The Heart and History of Mexican Culture in Dallas*. (Dallas: Los Barrios Unidos Community Clinic, 1981), 4. On July, 1927, the Park Board changed the name of Summit Park to Pike Park to honor the late Edgar Pike, who had served as a member of the Dallas Park Board from 190 until 1919. The Lipshey family are in-laws of the Zales.

³⁶Hexter had been president of the Dallas School board in 1907, and served as a city councilman from 1931 until 1935. He served as major pro-tem from 1932 until 1935. He was the vice- president of Union Title & Guarranty [sic] Company. Kramer, a retailer (A. Harris & Co.), and attorney was responsible for bringing the Metropolitan Opera Company to Dallas, by underwriting the costs and guaranteeing the profitabilities of the visits; in addition, he was president of the Dallas Art Association from 1925 until 1939, the Chamber of Commerce in 1930, and served as president of the Dallas Symphony from 1929 until 1941. Marcus was the leading retailer in Dallas as president of Neiman -Marcus. He was a founder, director, and treasurer of the Southwest Medical Foundation, a primary fundraiser for the establishment of SMU, chairman of the Dallas Grand Opera Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, and served as a director of the Dallas Art Association. Edward Titche, another retailer, (Titche-Goettinger & Co.), a charter member of the Red Cross in 1905, bought the building the Red Cross used for its headquarters and presented it to the organization in memory of his sister, Rose Titche Spencer. Titche was an original member of the Citizens' Charter Association; he served as a vice president of the Dallas Scottish Rite Hospital for Crippled Children; and served on the Advisory Committee for Baylor Medical Center of Dallas. Titche was a charter member of the Dallas Historical Society, and was a member of the board of directors of the State Fair of Texas. When he died, On February 11, 1944, flags were flown at half-mast at the Hall of State at Fair Park, the home of the Dallas Historical Society. Weiss, owner of a millinery supply company, lived in Oak Cliff and was a tireless promoter of civic projects there. He was vice-president of the Kessler Plan Association, president of the Oak-Cliff Dallas Commercial Association in 1926, and received a certificate of honor from Methodist Hospital for raising more money in its behalf than any other individual. An extremely charitable man, Weiss also bought one hundred cemetery lots so that there would be no pauper graves in Oak Cliff. Hexter,

Some of the members of Temple Emanu-El have made outstanding contributions to civic endeavors in Dallas. For example, Julius Schepps headed Dallas' first bi-racial commission, was co-chairman of St. Paul's Hospital building campaign, director for the United Fund, the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, Radio Station WRR, the Dallas Citizen's Council, and the Carruth Memorial Rehabilitation Center. He won the Linz Award in 1953. In 1962 the Press Club of Dallas presented Schepps with the Headliner of the Year Award, and one year later, Schepps received the Brotherhood Citation of the local chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. After his death in 1971, the Texas Legislature named him "Mr. Dallas."³⁷

Sue Lichten and Geraldine Danzer Beer were the first two chairmen for the Rhoads Terrace Project for pre-schoolers in an inner-city neighborhood. Started in September, 1965, Temple Emanu-El sponsored this project, which became part of the Dallas Day Care Association. Volunteers who were members of the Sisterhood of Temple Emanu-El

Kramer, Marcus, and Sanger also served as presidents of Temple Emanu-El. Their respective terms of office were: Hexter, 1903-1904; Kramer, 1922-1926; Marcus, 1919-1922; and Sanger, 1899-1901. Florence served as the treasure of Temple Emanu-El for a number of years, and donated the land for the new building. Stone served on the city's Park board from 1939 until 1947. He was active in securing playgrounds for South Dallas. He served on the Dallas Board of Education from 1950 until 1954. Weiss served the temple for years as chairman of its religious school; when he was eight-two, he remained as the honorary chairman. One other public school in Dallas is named after a Jew; Asher Silberstein. He was the vice-president and manager of Dallas Oil & Refining Company. He was an early contributor toward flood relief in 1908, when the Trinity river overran its banks. When he died in 1909, Silberstein left \$5,000.00 in his will to be used for public school purposes. In addition to this, original bequest, certain bequests in the will would ultimately accrue to the Dallas Public Schools upon the death of other beneficiaries.

³⁷Ron Tyler, ed. *New Handbook of Texas*, Vol. 5, (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), "Julius Schepps," by Lisa C. Maxwell, 915; Weingarten and Schechter, 200.

kept the project going. In 1971, the *Dallas Times Herald* honored the Temple Emanuel Sisterhood with its Club of the Year Award for distinguished service in the area of youth education because of its success with the Rhoads Terrace Pre-School. In 1978, Beer started the Family Place, Dallas's shelter for victims of family abuse. It became a model program for the entire country for sheltering and healing women abused by the men in their lives.³⁸ Other members of Temple Emanuel are given coverage in Gerry Cristol's history of the congregation, *A Light in the Prairie: Temple Emanuel-El of Dallas, 1872-1997*.

However, one member of the congregation deserves special mention. Annette Strauss. The first Jew and the first woman elected mayor in Dallas, her influence on her city will likely continue for years to come. Annette Greenfield Strauss made history when she became the first woman and the first Jew elected mayor of Dallas in 1987. Prior to that, Strauss had served on Dallas' Motion Picture Classification Board, the Municipal Library Board, and the Park and Recreation Board. In 1983, Strauss was first elected to the Dallas City Council. She was the Deputy Mayor Pro-Tem from 1983 to 1984, and served as Mayor Pro-Tem from 1984 until 1986. Before she became involved in politics, Strauss had devoted her life to civic and cultural affairs in the city. She raised over twenty million dollars for various campaigns and projects in Dallas, including the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the women's division of the United Way, and the Dallas County Heart Fund. As a result of her community involvement, Strauss received the Linz Award

³⁸Vivian Anderson Castleberry, *Daughters of Dallas*. Dallas: Odenwald Press, 1994, 377-379; Cristol, 190-191; Weingarten and Schechter, *Deep in the Heart*, 181.

in 1975. She received two honorary degrees; an honorary Doctorate in Public Service from the University of North Texas in 1992, and an honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from SMU in 1994. After serving Dallas as mayor, she became an ambassador at large for the city; served as chairman of the board of the John G. Tower Center for Political Studies at SMU and of the Dallas Council of World Affairs³⁹.

The other aspect of the legacy of David Lefkowitz was the ministry of Levi Olan, his successor, and of Gerald Klein, who came to Temple Emanu-El as an assistant rabbi in 1953, from Congregation Temple Gates in Schenectady, New York. Klein became Rabbi Emeritus after Olan. To many, Rabbi Olan became the voice of Emanu-El, and was respected and honored for his great oratory gifts and his contributions to the general community. However, Olan had a confrontational personality, and lacked the kind manner, quiet wisdom, and pastoral commitment that resided in Gerald Klein. It is in his ministry that the spiritual legacy of David Lefkowitz resides.

David Lefkowitz was a man of his time, a period of growth for Dallas. Although he was scrupulous about attending to his duties at Temple Emanu-El, he is best remembered for the impact he made on Dallas. Although small in stature, (he is remembered and described in all accounts as being a short man, probably not over five feet, seven inches tall), his influence on his beloved Dallas was great. By participating in the Red Cross, the Rotary, the Masons, and other worthwhile organizations, he taught by example that Jews were not to be feared or hated by the larger, Christian community, but were good,

³⁹*Jewish Women in America*, Vol. II, M-Z. New York: Routledge, 1997, "Annette Greenfield Strauss" by Jane Guzman, 1348; *Dallas Downtown News*, 6 November, 1975; *Dallas Morning News*, December 9, 1998.

solid citizens, ready to do their share of work to make Dallas a better city for all its people. David Lefkowitz led his congregation, and other members of the Jewish community of Dallas to participate in civic affairs to a greater extent than they would have otherwise done. He showed them that participation in all aspects of Dallas, not only those that strictly benefitted the Jewish community, would make a positive difference in their lives and in the lives of the greater, non-Jewish community. By precept and example, he taught them what it meant to be better citizens of Dallas.

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